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ABSTRACT

Attended by 121 member states of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), this conference was devoted to the discussion of two topics: "Education for all: renewed policies and strategies for the 1990s" and "The struggle against illiteracy through universal primary education and adult education: operational aspects emphasizing the active participation of the learner." A summary of discussions in the plenary meeting addresses the concept and role of education, opportunities for women and girls, disadvantaged groups, the need for improvements, resources for educational development, and international co-operation. Working groups dealt with more specific topics, such as: instructional methods, materials, and technologies; training; and more effective partnerships. This report also contains the text of a recommendation to ministries of education on the struggle against illiteracy. The texts of seven untitled addresses made during the conference, lists of documents distributed during the conference, national reports submitted to the conference, and a list of participants are included in appendices. (DB)

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Final Report

International Conference on Education
42nd Session

Geneva
3-8 September 1990

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Final Report

International Conference on Education

42nd Session

Geneva
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Unesco

International Bureau
of Education

ED/MD/92
Paris, January 1991

SUMMARY

The 42nd session of the International Conference on Education was held at the International Conference Centre of Geneva from 3 to 8 September 1990. It was convened by the Director-General of UNESCO in conformity with resolution 1.2, adopted by the General Conference at its twenty-fifth session.

The Conference discussed the following matters: 'Education for all: renewed policies and strategies for the 1990s' and 'The struggle against illiteracy through universal primary education and adult education: operational aspects emphasizing the active participation of the learner'.

At the end of its discussions the Conference adopted its report and Recommendation No. 77 to ministries of education concerning 'The struggle against illiteracy: operational policies, strategies and programmes for the 1990s'.

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VII. Closing address by Mr Dominique Föllmi, Councillor of State, Head of the Public Education Department of the Republic and Canton of Geneva and Head of the Swiss Delegation

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INTRODUCTION

1. The 42nd session of the International Conference on Education, convened by the Director-General of UNESCO in accordance with resolution 1.2 adopted by the General Conference at its twenty-fifth session, was held at the International Conference Centre, Geneva, from 3 to 8 September 1990.

2. The Conference was attended by 121 Member States of UNESCO, three non-Member States, Palestine, six organizations of the United Nations system, nine other intergovernmental organizations, 26 international non-governmental organizations and two foundations. The 42nd session of the Conference thus brought together 533 delegates, including 41 ministers and 31 deputy ministers of education, and 87 representatives and observers, i.e. in all 620 participants. The list of participants in the 42nd session is appended hereto.

3. Opening the 42nd session, H.E. Mr Ahmed Fathi Sorour, Minister of Education of Egypt, Chairman of the 41st session of the International Conference on Education, gave the floor to Mr Federico Mayor Zaragoza, Director-General of UNESCO.

4. In his address to the Conference the Director-General thanked the authorities of the Swiss Confederation and those of the Republic and Canton of Geneva for their hospitality and welcomed the delegates of Member States, the observers from non-Member States and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and the representatives of organizations of the United Nations system. He noted the special importance of the theme of the 42nd session of the Conference, which was one of the principal international activities organized by UNESCO in the framework of International Literacy Year. In the follow-up to the World Conference on Education for All, held at Jomtien (Thailand) in March 1990, the Conference also marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of the World Congress of Ministers of Education on the Eradication of Illiteracy (Tehran, 1965), while its closure coincided with International Literacy Day (8 September). Noting its complementarity with the Jomtien Conference, the Director-General restated its objective, which was to examine the most effective strategies and methods for promoting basic skill acquisition by strengthening primary education and intensifying adult-education programmes.

5. After a rapid survey of the state of primary education and adult-literacy teaching and of their progress, shortcomings and trends, the Director-General set these developments in the present world context, referring in particular to the worsening economic situation and the scale of foreign debt, which were affecting many Third World Member States. He stressed the importance of the right to education and its full and unfettered exercise for the development of the individual and the enjoyment of other human rights, placing special emphasis on its humanistic and cultural dimensions. Referring to the need to improve the quality and relevance of primary education, the Director-General voiced his concern at the high drop-out and repetition rates at this level of education.

6. Given the vast scope of the task of implementing the Plan of Action to Eradicate Illiteracy by the Year 2000 and the conclusions of the Jomtien Conference, Mr Mayor observed, such a critical situation should be met by emergency action calling for exceptional measures on the part of Member States and the international community. He added that special attention and priority support should be given to countries that had suffered most from economic and financial difficulties. Referring to the Africa region, in particular sub-Saharan Africa, which was facing some of the worst problems, he suggested that the next regional conference of ministers of education and those

responsible for economic planning in African Member States might discuss the transformation of the regional programme for the eradication of illiteracy in Africa into an emergency programme for the universalization of primary education and adult-literacy education. He concluded with an appeal for solidarity and international co-operation.

7. Mr Ahmed Fathi Sorour then took the floor and suggested, inter alia, that further efforts be made to seek new learning methods and to extend the concept of literacy education. That was not, he said, a purely technical issue but a process that should be placed in a specific socio-economic and cultural context and should take account of differences between societies, environments and cultures. Referring to the increasing importance of education, he spoke of the need to give it a vocational dimension, adding that the effective curricula were those that developed a person's whole potential. He also emphasized the importance of the cultural dimension of education.

8. The outgoing Chairman then gave the floor to Mr Dominique Föllmi, Chairman of the State Council, head of the Public Education Department of the Republic and Canton of Geneva and head of the Swiss delegation. After paying his respects to the Director-General, the authorities present and the delegates of Member States, he stated that illiteracy, which did not affect all countries, social strata, sexes and ages equally, is not something that can be considered in isolation from its context. On the contrary, it reveals, reflects and sustains the correlative factors of poverty, exploitation, unemployment, political dependence and social marginalization. Literacy, he said, is the means of achieving dignity and becoming aware of and capable of acting on one's socio-economic and political environment; it is also a means of democratization, because it facilitates social promotion. He pointed out the vicious circle typical of illiteracy: without financial resources there can be no basic or adult education, and without basic education there can be no control over the material environment and no development of resources. He concluded by saying that the fight against illiteracy was the best means of establishing peace in our world.

9. Mr Anil Bordia, head of the delegation of India, Secretary, Ministry of Human Resource Development, was elected Chairman of the 42nd session by acclamation. Taking the chair, he thanked the outgoing Chairman and the authorities present and stressed the importance of the present session of the Conference.

10. The elected Chairman introduced the IBE Council's proposals regarding the distribution of posts in the Bureau of the Conference. On the proposal of the electoral groups, the following nine Vice-Chairpersons were elected by acclamation:

Mr Antonio Salonia (Argentina);
Mr Todor Anguelov Todorov (Bulgaria);
Mr Mikhail I. Demtchuk (Byelorussian SSR);
Mr Wang Minda (China);
Mr Jean Kolipe Lama (Guinea);
Mr Alberto Balboni (Italy);
Ms Fatma Muktar (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya);
Mr Fernando Pérez Correa (Mexico);
Ms Joyce Mpanga (Uganda).

Mr Poul Lassen (Denmark) was elected Rapporteur of the Conference by acclamation.

11. The Chairman then suspended the plenary meeting to open the first meeting of the Commission, of which Mr Bashir El Bakri (Sudan) was elected Chairman by acclamation. The Commission meeting was suspended. Inviting the delegates to resume the plenary meeting, the Chairman submitted the provisional agenda (ED/BIE/CONFINTED 42/1), the draft amendment to the Revised Rules of Procedure of the International Conference on Education (ED/BIE/CONFINTED 42/5) and the proposed organization of the work of the Conference (ED/BIE/CONFINTED 42/2) to the Conference, which adopted them unanimously.

12. The plenary debates started with a speech by Mr Ruang Chareonchai, Deputy Permanent Secretary for Education of Thailand, who spoke of the preparation and organization of the World Conference on Education for All, held in his country in March 1990. Referring to the conclusions of that Conference and the high priority given to basic education for all, he ended with an appeal for joint action for a literate world.

13. Mr Wadi Haddad, representative of the World Bank and former Executive Secretary of the World Conference on Education for All, then briefly reviewed the major decisions adopted by the Jomtien Conference, in particular the World Declaration on Education for All and the Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs, and noted how important it was for Member States and the international community to act on the conclusions of the Conference. Given the need to mobilize all available resources, he stressed the importance of partnership in that regard and referred to the concerted action by and joint commitment of the organizations of the United Nations system that had co-sponsored the Conference: the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank. In order that primary schooling for all the world's children becomes an attainable goal by the year 2000, it would be necessary to transfer a little more than $1 billion annually in external aid, in addition to some reallocation of expenditure towards schooling by developing countries themselves. He specified that the World Bank alone will be providing an additional $750 million annually.

PART I

EDUCATION FOR ALL:
RENEWED POLICIES AND STRATEGIES FOR THE 1990s

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS IN THE PLENARY MEETING

14. 'Literacy is an indispensable condition for the moral development of an individual, regardless of nationality, for the realization of his or her role in an integrated and interdependent world.' This quotation from President Gorbachev's message to the Conference reflects a sentiment that was often expressed in the debate.

15. All speakers warmly welcomed the theme of the Conference. It was seen as a natural choice to highlight International Literacy Year, and it also formed a significant follow-up to the World Conference on Education for All, which was held in Jomtien, Thailand, in March 1990. There was also much appreciation of the quality of the documentation and the preparation of the Conference. The overriding consideration in the debate was that the international community should now move on from vision to reality, from theory to action, and that the focus of the Conference should be on workable operational approaches for dealing with the problems.

16. All Member States have made basic education one of their most urgent priorities for educational development. As was clearly expressed by one delegate, to make basic education a priority is an urgent necessity but it requires time, perseverance and the participation of the entire population.

17. Great stress was placed, in almost all speeches, on the point that universalization of primary education and the achievement of a literate world are essential for enabling humankind to meet global challenges. The two-track approach, which was clearly spelled out in the working document, was fully endorsed by the Conference. Indeed, one delegate saw it as a necessary approach to avoid a two-track world, both between and within nations.

18. Literacy was considered vital for all other forms of knowledge and skills. The promotion of basic education, which is closely tied to the eradication of poverty, should be central to any educational policy. It was felt that the promotion of literacy deserves and should receive its due share of moral and material support if illiteracy is to be substantially reduced. In addition, it was put forward that there are common features in preventive action and post-literacy activities in the developing and developed world. Illiteracy is an obstacle to and a brake on development.

19. Most delegates reported on their follow-up activities to the World Conference on Education for All. Almost all had completed or were at an advanced stage of publicizing the Declaration and Framework for Action of the Conference. These activities had taken the form of translating the documents into national and local languages, information meetings within countries and regional and subregional meetings of professional groups. Indeed, as one speaker pointed out, information activities aimed also at creating greater knowledge of the serious situation regarding illiteracy in developing countries and promoting public understanding of the need to support basic education in those countries.

20. The tenor of the debate was that if there are to be significant advances in education it must meet two requirements. First, identification of the challenges of education for all and, second, adaptation to the changes required. Taking this as a context for the analysis of the statements in plenary, this summary will look briefly at how delegates saw the concept and role of education and then in turn focus on the scope and gravity of the problem; the challenges and response to qualitative improvements; enhancement of opportunities for girls and women; concern with disadvantaged groups; resources for education; and international co-operation.

A. CONCEPT AND ROLE OF EDUCATION

21. Speakers proposed many different definitions of the purpose and role of education in general and literacy training in particular. All of them, however, showed a common concern: the need for greater functionality and relevance is now universally recognized and accepted. It was obvious that, for all concerned, education is not an end in itself but a means of catering to specific individual and collective needs.

22. There was also unanimous support for a broader concept of literacy, transcending the mere learning of mechanical techniques. Reading and writing, one speaker said, constituted an essential stage of literacy, but the purpose of acquiring those tools was to make possible an informed critical analysis of the environment with a view to mastering and changing it. That being so, several delegates acknowledged the difficulty of giving a universal definition of literacy valid for all countries and societies, irrespective of their level of economic and technological development.

23. Our task, one speaker maintained, was to train the citizen of the year 2000. Several delegates stressed the need to relate education to the real-life problems that young people and adults met or would meet in their daily and working lives; it should give them the means to improve their standard of living and to make the most of the surrounding resources. For some countries facing serious economic difficulties it was primarily a means of survival. Several delegates linked the idea of participation to that of functionality. To give individuals or social groups access to reading and writing, other delegates added, was to give them a means of political expression and the basic tools they needed to participate in decisions affecting their existence and their future.

24. There was general agreement that the functionality of literacy was not only economic but also social and cultural, and that the universality of education should be based on respect for the world's specific different cultures.

25. Several delegates stressed the fact that the struggle against illiteracy was also a struggle for justice, freedom, democracy, world peace and greater equality, linked to the right of all individuals to play an economic, social and political role in the society in which they live and the recognition of their right to benefit from the advantages of development.

B. SCOPE AND GRAVITY OF THE PROBLEM

26. Delegates went beyond the figures of both the numbers and percentages of illiterates and those who did not have access to schooling to describe some significant details that gave another dimension to the urgency of the problem: the effects of war on the provision of education, the consequences of the debt crisis, the problem of lack of facilities, the difficulty of maintaining the quality of programmes, teaching materials and teaching personnel, school failure and finally the evidence of research.

27. The destruction of schools in wars and civil strife and the consequences of this were highlighted in several presentations. One speaker indicated that, as a result of war in his country, the official structure of the educational system as well as literacy education had collapsed in rural areas. Another noted that large numbers of children were displaced from their schools in occupied areas.

28. Economic difficulties and the debt crisis had serious adverse effects. One delegate said that the destruction of the economy and corruption placed serious constraints on the mass education needed to stimulate development. It was also pointed out by one African delegate that there was a slowing down and even regression in schooling, because of the persistent debt crisis. This crisis also had a serious effect on provision in Latin America, as illustrated by one delegate from that region, who observed that the 1980s had seen the situation in his country becoming worse and illiteracy beginning to soar.

29. Many countries underlined the fact that school facilities are inadequate and that this produces serious adverse consequences for the quality of education. The tendency to migrate from rural areas to the city has produced grave overcrowding in the city schools. Overcrowding in schools also results from the growing demand for schooling as participation rates and populations increase. The situation in many rural areas is very serious, particularly in mountainous and backward areas where the population is scattered and the economy, education and culture are underdeveloped. In these areas schools hardly exist, and those that do are often badly equipped.

30. In both developed and developing countries the need for relevant books and libraries as an indispensable part of the supporting environment for literacy was pointed out. The Conference was also reminded that such basic instruments for teaching and learning as blackboards and chalk are still lacking in the schools of the most deprived countries. Yet, not only teaching materials but programmes were noted as being in need of revision, while teaching personnel were in short supply.

31. The situation with respect to teachers was commented on in all its various aspects. Many countries experienced a shortage of teachers. In addition, even when there were teachers the level of qualifications of some of them in academic and professional areas was of concern, and as a result of this a number of delegates stressed the importance of initial and continuous professional training.

32. Educational wastage was often mentioned as one of the major problems that, wherever it occurs, is indicative of the low quality of education. The poorest sectors, who receive low-quality education, are the most affected. High drop-out and repetition and a lack of relationship between education and working life all result in increased socio-economic costs.

33. A number of research projects, particularly in developed countries, are trying to quantify the extent of the various dimensions of the problems of functional literacy. It was pointed out that difficulties will come not only from preparing programmes to tackle the problems which are being revealed; it will also be necessary to persuade the decision-makers and the public at large to accept and act on the results.

C. ENHANCEMENT OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

34. Almost all delegates recognized the special attention which must be given to the education of women and girls. Not only do women continue to be disadvantaged in terms of the provision of education, but there is a ready acceptance that the education of women is a critical factor for educational development in society.

35. There was a call for affirmative action in favour of women and that they should be given priority within the framework of the existing national programmes for education. One delegate suggested that, in the 1990s, a fundamental strategy should be the transfer of greater resources to female literacy, post-literacy and continuing education. Another indicated that in his country laws have been enacted to deal with such issues as the withdrawal of young girls from school for early marriage. A number of delegates also reported on the establishment of national commissions for women, with special focus on educational development.

36. Some speakers felt that the proposals in the draft recommendation dealing with women and girls should be strengthened. They argued that in Jomtien education for women and girls was treated as the most urgent priority and that it was not enough to speak only of their being given 'special attention' in the follow-up. One concrete measure was to offer incentives to young girls to enhance their participation in school, to stay in school, and to integrate them into a meaningful working life when they leave school.

37. Among the practical measures proposed were intensifying awareness in communities where cultural impediments result in low participation by girls in education, special programmes to raise the level of female participation in general, and the mobilization of educated women to help other women become literate. It was urged that all these measures are important for equality of opportunity and quality education for women.

D. CONCERN WITH DISADVANTAGED GROUPS

38. The Conference recognized that there were a number of disadvantaged groups that needed special attention. Among them were nomads, migrants, refugees, the disabled and persons living in isolated areas and difficult circumstances. Delegates not only highlighted some aspects of the problem affecting these groups but gave information on specific action that was being undertaken.

39. It was readily agreed that the provision of education for nomads and other mobile populations is a major problem. The main difficulty is that few teachers can be found among nomads. One country has established a commission to co-ordinate the nomadic education programme. Another indicated the lack of teachers for the mobile schools that are planned for nomads and hoped that there could be international help in this area.

40. While not the same, problems with migrant groups were equally severe. Illiteracy and functional illiteracy were characteristic of migrants mainly in the language of the host country. The numbers of migrants were significant. One country stated that migrants formed 16 per cent of the population but that 25 per cent of the active population was made up of foreigners. This had serious effects not only on their functioning in society but also on the education of their children. Specific measures which were reported included the imminent introduction of an easy-to-read national newspaper, special classes for migrants and greater emphasis on pre-school education and on the involvement of parents.

41. The recognition of other disadvantaged groups was accompanied by indications of activities being undertaken. However, as was noted by a number of speakers, an underlying problem remained. This concerned marginalized groups not involved in the education system and who need to have attention paid to their socio-economic status at the same time as the provision of schooling.

E. CHALLENGE OF AND RESPONSE TO THE NEED FOR QUALITATIVE IMPROVEMENTS

42. In response to the widely felt need to move on to the operational phase, the vast majority of speakers in their contributions described the solutions that have been proposed or are already being tried to meet the problems that exist in the education system. Providing good quality primary education was seen as a long-term solution to having all adults contribute to and benefit from development. This problem of quality is the common concern of both developed and developing countries.

43. Perhaps the area where most concerted action is under way is the training and use of educational personnel. There was widespread support for giving the highest level of attention to teachers and their training. Many programmes are already under way - expanding regular pre-service and in-service programmes, distance education and holiday courses, and training the educated unemployed as literacy workers. In addition, activities with other educational personnel, such as in-service courses for primary school headteachers and inspectors of schools in educational supervision and management, were reported. One country mentioned that by using the double-shift system in urban areas and multi-grade classes in rural areas they had been able to maximize the teachers' use of time.

44. In order for the teachers to be most effective, a wide variety of programmes are being developed, for, as many delegations pointed out, education for all implies differentiated policies and programmes. Many examples were given of programmes which were suited to specific national contexts.

45. Some speakers gave details of plans with specific targets for the achievement of universal primary education (UPE) and an increase in adult literacy. In addition to reporting on their plans, many delegates described a variety of intersectoral and interministerial bodies that were set up to supervise the implementation activities. Mention was also made of structural reform. However, the discussions reflected that some countries preferred progressive renewal whilst others favoured a complete overhaul of entire structures.

46. Several delegates spoke of the major efforts being made to produce curricular materials for the use of both teachers and pupils. Particular stress was given to the wide variety of textbooks being produced, and delegates from Arabic-speaking countries reported that better schoolbooks were available as a result of a special programme in the Arab world. Unfortunately, as was stated with respect to sub-Saharan Africa, this is not true of all regions. The development of libraries is another promising feature, and many examples were reported. In this connection one delegate stated his country's plan to have a library in every district by the year 2000.

47. The majority of speeches reflected the fact that attention is being given to all these areas, which research and experience have shown are critical for the qualitative development of education systems and literacy programmes for adults. The major problem was the lack of resources to accomplish all these projects.

F. RESOURCES FOR EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

48. Resources for education, both financial and human, were clearly identified as being essential elements for the development of basic education. By far the most critical is finance.

49. The financing of basic education was seen to be a national concern. However, this was generally accepted as a long-term view. There was widespread support that, in view of the difficult economic situation in which most countries find themselves, and also as a short-term measure to move developing countries ahead quickly from the current situation, there should be international support for basic education.

50. A number of practical proposals were presented by Member States for their own action at the national level before they made suggestions for international support. Many delegates stressed the need to identify at the national level potential new sources of funding at the private level to complement public efforts. Individuals, enterprises and communities were all possible sources of private-sector support.

51. Action in the public domain could also lead to more efficient use of the financial resources available. Thus some delegates saw that a rationalization of the costs, especially through the development of alternatives to the very costly formal system for some aspects of basic education, would be highly desirable. Furthermore, some countries stated that not only had they increased their educational budget but a larger share of it was now being devoted to primary and basic education.

52. However, many countries reaffirmed that financial assistance through bilateral and multilateral sources was a vital necessity. In this respect a number of suggestions were made. The main ones were: (i) basic education should be given protection when policies are put forward for structural adjustment; (ii) creditor nations and agencies should work out a formula with debtors whereby some of the funds now being used for debt servicing could be diverted to basic education; and (iii) donor countries should reconsider seriously the issue of aid volume, as only a few countries have so far met the target of 0.7 per cent of GNP as was adopted by the United Nations.

53. Several Member States gave details of the extent of their countries' contribution to the efforts in favour of basic education. In this respect one Member State stated its plans in the fiscal year 1990 to contribute $700,000 to support literacy programmes in its region.

G. INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

54. Even though it has long been acknowledged that the countries concerned by the elimination of illiteracy should rely first on their own resources, all speakers emphasized the additional need for closer co-operation, not only between industrialized countries but also between the developing countries themselves, at both regional and international levels. Yet, if that co-operation was to be effective, as one delegate pointed out, the efforts of governments, NGOs and co-operation agencies must be co-ordinated, in particular by a joint definition of objectives and adequate strategies.

55. Moreover, as another speaker stated, it was highly desirable to define new forms of solidarity and new policies of North-South and South-South co-operation. One delegate said that the need for such regional and international co-operation arose from the mobility of human groups, migration and the technological development of societies.

56. The theme underlying our work, from Jomtien to Geneva, was, as another speaker observed, the awareness that the solution to the problem of illiteracy could be found only through new alliances. Several speakers stressed that education for all demanded support from all.

57. Reference was also made to the need for the international co-operation programmes to emphasize the most innovative aspects of the World Conference on Education for All; in particular, mechanisms should now be established to co-ordinate the support of the international community.

58. Finally, one speaker said it was high time that the industrialized and affluent countries - the developed world - proposed special programmes of large-scale assistance to make the dream of literacy come true.

PART II

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST ILLITERACY THROUGH UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION AND ADULT EDUCATION: OPERATIONAL ASPECTS EMPHASIZING THE ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF THE LEARNER

INTRODUCTION

1. Under the chairmanship of Mr Bashir El Bakri (Sudan), the Commission elected Mr Manfred Weiss (Federal Republic of Germany) and Mr Thomas Ndikumana (Burundi) Vice-Chairmen; Mr Ricardo Hevia Rivas (Chile) Rapporteur; and Mr Y. Brunsvick (France), Mr N. Netchaev (USSR), Mr E. Rivas Casado (Venezuela), Mr M. Inoue (Japan), Mr E.A. Yoloye (Nigeria) and Mr A. Fetni (Algeria) members of the Drafting Committee. The chairmanship of the Drafting Committee was accorded to Mr Y. Brunsvick.

2. On the proposal of the IBE Council, the Commission elected the following chairmen and rapporteurs for the six working groups:

Working Group I:	Formal and non-formal primary education and adult literacy: concerted action to achieve education for all Chairman: Mr Mveli Elliot Ginindza (Swaziland) Rapporteur: Ms Agneta Lind (Sweden)
Working Group II:	Literacy and post-literacy programmes: relevance, quality and functionality of content; instructional methods, materials and technologies Chairman: Mr Lascelles Lewis (Jamaica) Rapporteur: Ms Fatima Sherif-Nor (Somalia)
Working Group III:	Evaluation of the learners' achievement and of the larger impact of literacy and basic education Chairman: Mr Abdul Rahman Arshad (Malaysia) Rapporteur: Mr Joseph Farrell (Canada)
Working Group IV:	Initial and continuing training of literacy teachers and of other personnel in literacy work Chairman: Mr Joaquín Garcia Carrasco (Spain) Rapporteur: Mr Anthony Okech (Uganda)
Working Group V:	Functional literacy and continuing education: issues pertaining to industrialized as well as developing countries Chairman: Mr Victor Onushkin (USSR) Rapporteur: Mr Jesus Hernando Duarte Agudelo (Colombia)
Working Group VI:	Establishing new and more effective partnerships; management and mobilization of resources to ensure education for all Chairman: Mr Abdel Fattah Galal (Egypt) Rapporteur: Mr Washington P. Napitupulu (Indonesia)

The Commission stressed the importance of dialogue and close interaction among delegates in the working groups.

3. Before breaking up into working groups the Commission received succinct reports on progress and problems in the field of literacy in Africa, the Arab States, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Asia and the Pacific, presented by the Directors of UNESCO's Regional Offices in these major regions. In addition, the Director of the UNESCO Institute of Education gave an overview of the institute's research programmes relating to formal and non-formal basic education and literacy.

A. FORMAL AND NON-FORMAL PRIMARY EDUCATION AND ADULT LITERACY: CONCERTED ACTION TO ACHIEVE EDUCATION FOR ALL
(Working Group I)

1. The working group examined ways and means of achieving education for all through formal and non-formal primary education for children and literacy programmes for adolescents and adults. The Chairman drew the attention of the working group to paragraphs 44 to 51 of the main working document (ED/BIE/CONFINTED 42/3), which relate directly to the subject it was charged to examine on behalf of the Conference. In order to profit from the new organizational pattern of ICE, in which the Commission is constituted of six working groups, the Chairman requested members to avoid lengthy formal statements and to engage in an exchange of views and experiences on particular issues.

2. Group I also deliberated on 38 draft amendments to preliminary Draft Recommendation No. 77, focusing its attention on those relating to paragraphs 8, 9 and 10, concerned with the renewal of policies, strategies and structure for promoting education for all. The Rapporteur, Ms Agneta Lind (Sweden) was charged with transmitting the views of the working group on the draft amendments to the Drafting Committee.

3. The working group considered that it was called upon to examine ways of increasing the quality and relevance as well as the coverage of formal and non-formal primary education and literacy programmes. In the course of its discussions it explored, inter alia, the following issues: measures for ensuring quality education, ways and means of extending educational opportunities by using scarce educational resources more efficiently, the role of non-formal education in complementing or replacing formal education, and the role of adult-literacy programmes.

4. Several participants pointed out that attainment of the numerical targets for the universalization of primary education does not in itself satisfy the aims of education for all unless it is accompanied by acceptable standards of quality. It was recognized that a large number of children who enter the formal school either drop out without completing the primary cycle or pass through the system without acquiring the minimum competencies required for life. It is for this reason that the quality of primary education is of critical importance.

5. The group identified several factors that have a bearing on the quality of education, such as the relevance of content to the needs and aspirations of the learners, the physical, cultural and environmental settings in which they live and their opportunities after completing their primary education. In this regard, much emphasis was laid on the need to link education to the world of work and the provision of life skills and income-generating abilities conducive to self-reliance and self-employment.

6. As a strategy for linking theory and practice, some countries have introduced their own apprenticeship schemes, where children are given the opportunity of acquiring basic vocational skills pertinent to the occupations

common in their communities. Several examples of such schemes were described. However, some participants expressed reservations regarding the feasibility of introducing vocational and income-generating skills into the primary curriculum.

7. Another aspect that was considered to have an important bearing on educational quality was the language of instruction. The importance of using the mother tongue during the first years of the primary cycle as the medium of instruction was emphasized, while the need for a national language in multilingual and multicultural settings was recognized. The need for content of interest and relevance to the needs of both girls and boys was also stressed.

8. Recognizing that the quality of primary education was closely linked to the quality of the teachers, physical facilities and teaching/learning materials, the group advocated the urgent need to improve and strengthen these aspects as prerequisites for improving the quality of primary education in developing countries.

9. There was general agreement that a combination of measures was needed to increase primary-education retention rates and achievement. The introduction of automatic promotion and continuous assessment instead of testing for promotion between grades was considered one necessary step to avoid repetition and dropping out. Training in such methods should be included in pre-service or in-service teacher-training courses. In general, it was emphasized that better teacher training, especially in-service training schemes, is essential to the improvement of education in most developing countries. Teachers also need to be provided with adequate and sufficient teaching tools and with incentives and assistance, in order to maintain their motivation and performance.

10. As the problem of dropping out and non-attendance is often greater among girls than boys, it was recommended that special measures be taken to make parents aware of the value of education for girls. Legislation on compulsory primary education and against premature marriage was cited as a useful but not sufficient condition to achieve equal educational access for and retention of boys and girls.

11. The group also emphasized the importance of literacy and other special education programmes for women, together with measures to reduce their work-load and help them generate income for their families.

12. A large part of the working group's discussion was devoted to exploring ways and means of extending educational opportunities by making more efficient use of scarce resources. Many members mentioned their experience of multi-shift schools, which enabled the same teachers and buildings to serve an enlarged student population. This was considered by many speakers to be an essential measure for achieving education for all. It was noted, however, that special efforts are needed to ensure the success of such an approach. First, students and parents must be convinced that multi-shift schools do not provide a second-rate education. Then, teachers must be motivated by extra pay or other incentives to enthusiastically support an approach that increases their workload. Finally, it was emphasized that multi-shift schools require revised curricula and more intensive instructional methods to enable students to learn more rapidly in order to compensate for a shorter school day. It was recommended that the experience of multi-shift schools be studied and disseminated by UNESCO.

13. Other speakers referred to the need to devise special approaches and methods enabling teachers to cope with multigrade primary schools, where the

same teacher must instruct students of differing ages and levels of achievement. Both developing and industrialized countries referred to their experience in this domain and offered to share it with other Member States.

14. One speaker mentioned that, in regard to both multi-shift and multigrade schools, there was an urgent need to examine how such schools can be made to work more effectively. Other means of stretching limited educational resources mentioned in the discussion were cost sharing, greater community involvement, the use of volunteers and distance education. It was mentioned that in many situations the government provides the teacher, but the community builds and maintains the schools. Distance education was felt to have potential, but speakers noted that the results achieved by the use of radio were variable.

15. It was recognized that, in spite of efforts made to achieve the targets of universalization of primary education by expanding and strengthening the formal schools system, there exist certain categories of children, varying in numbers from country to country, who cannot benefit from the formal school for various reasons. There are also early drop-outs from the formal system, who are at risk of joining the ranks of the adult illiterates. It was felt that the only strategy to meet this need was to develop non-formal and non-conventional structures and approaches to provide primary education to out-of-school. Children and youth, making use for this purpose of all available teaching/learning settings and resources available in the local community. Such approaches should be designed to meet the basic learning needs of these target groups. Several examples were cited of such 'catch-up' or 'second-chance' programmes, which permitted some learners to rejoin the formal education system.

16. There was a consensus that illiteracy cannot be eradicated by formal primary education alone. In most developing countries special literacy programmes or campaigns for adolescents and adults are under way. Examples were cited of programmes aimed at specific target groups such as out-of-school youth, farmers, rural women and others. It was noted that literate adults support education for their children and contribute to the establishment of a literate and literacy-sustaining environment upon which the success of all educational efforts ultimately depends.

B. LITERACY AND POST-LITERACY PROGRAMMES: RELEVANCE, QUALITY AND FUNCTIONALITY OF CONTENT; INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS, MATERIALS AND TECHNOLOGIES

(Working Group II)

1. Following the general recommendation to establish an overall group discussion drawing on country experiences but not focused on individual and specific country reports, the group examined the discussion points raised in working document ED/BIE/CONFINTED 42/3, paragraphs 52 to 71.

2. An intensive exchange of views was then carried out around the following broad issues:

(a) relevance of literacy and post-literacy programmes; forms of relevance and how to achieve such relevance in operational terms;

(b) functionality of literacy, its nature and different manifestations in industrialized and developing countries;

(c) language issues in literacy in multilingual settings;

(d) how to improve the quality of teaching/learning methods, materials and media;

(e) the importance of post-literacy and its crucial role in the overall literacy strategy;

(f) learning for autonomy and the place of technology in promoting self-learning and interlearning.

3. The different aspects of relevance as presented in paragraph 55 of the working document served as a guiding checklist for the group discussion. While this list was found to be quite exhaustive and although in general the group adhered to it, it was proposed to add individual relevance as well as relevance for different age-groups. It was, however, stressed that individual relevance does not mean that content should be individually tailored but that due attention should be given to the individual's potential in relation to his/her actual performance. Pedagogic and linguistic relevance and, particularly, the relevance of materials and media should not be lost sight of. Adhering to the criteria outlined, the group, nevertheless, stressed the difficulty of introducing them in operation. How to cater to specific local needs and interests and simultaneously reflect national concerns is not an easy undertaking. Policy constraints, material limitations and lack of trained personnel often hampered the efforts made by countries. The need for relevance, in particular the gender issue, was found to be of equal importance in all countries, irrespective of their specificities and regardless of whether the countries concerned were industrialized or developing ones. Caution was expressed about the propensity of industrialized countries to give excessive weight to individual relevance at the expense of cultural and social aspects.

4. Functionality was the next thematic field touched upon by the group. A large number of participants were of the opinion that literacy is always functional. The broader literacy is defined, the wider is the functionality. Literacy and education are closely linked. As education is for life and through life, literacy should be closely related to the learner's life and be an integral part of a lifelong learning process aimed at improving the quality of life. It should be a continuous and functional process and integrate all aspects of life - individual, family, social, vocational, democracy, peace, gender issues, etc. Others argued that it cannot be said that all literacy is functional. Moreover, literacy per se is not functional, for the act of learning is an individual one; it is only the circumstances of literacy that lead to functionality, to selectivity, etc. This leads to the selection of differentiated strategies appropriate to the specific constraints prevailing in each situation. The degree of functionality and the need for it is found to be closely linked with the participants' age. There was a marked convergence of views among participants from North and South on the need for clarity regarding literacy definition and its functionality. As definitions are country-specific, if not situation-specific, international and cross-national fora tend to avoid conceptual debates. In this regard a criticism was levelled at the general tendency of governments and businesses to determine what functionality is and what criteria it should meet, leaving little or no room for people to use literacy for self-determination, political participation, etc.

5. Because of the internal linguistic and cultural diversity that characterizes all the countries of the world, strictly monolingual countries hardly exist. In multilingual countries situations vary widely depending on the history, socio-economic context, value system and ethnic composition of the population. In many developing countries there is no easy solution to the problems raised by this phenomenon. Most countries have many languages and are struggling to find appropriate compromises between the two extreme attitudes

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represented by the use of all vernacular languages (an ideal position that may be financially and practically difficult to achieve) and the imposition of one language (sometimes a foreign one), which is culturally and politically unacceptable. It was admitted that the choice of literacy languages should conform to certain criteria, among others:

the language of literacy should preferably be known to the learners as well as to the trainers/facilitators;

there should be a critical mass of speakers with mastery of the language;

the language should be functional for communication purposes in the local and national context;

there should be enough reading material available to avoid relapse into illiteracy.

6. Regarding factors contributing to the quality of literacy, the methods, materials and media for learning were emphasized during the discussions. Materials should respond to adult learner's needs and also be suitable for use and application in their daily lives and in solving their problems. The learning process should be meaningful. It was felt important that the materials and methods of teaching should bring about an immediate effect on the learner in order to motivate him or her continuously throughout the process. The method of teaching/learning should foster a climate of participation on the part of the learner, self-confidence and self-teaching, depending on the level reached. When planning and developing methods, materials and media, proper co-ordination and careful planning are to be seen as prerequisites for attaining the learning goals. Materials distribution could be hindered by bad roads and poor communication and transportation systems, especially in rural areas. Some delegates described their experience of overcoming such problems through co-ordination and co-operation among different ministries, agencies, etc., working in such areas. Preparing and dispensing the materials in advance, decentralizing production, local community committees, establishing intersectoral committees, etc., were also considered to be ways of overcoming the problem. Relevant media and oral tradition could also enhance the learning process.

7. The aims of post-literacy materials could be as follows: (a) to enhance the quality of literacy learning by consolidating reading and writing habits; (b) to prevent relapse into illiteracy; (c) to improve and continue the acquisition of knowledge and skills through post-literacy training courses. Thus, the post-literacy programmes must be formulated and based on the learners' practical knowledge and needs so as to enable them to cope with daily life.

8. Methods of utilizing new educational technologies to promote self-teaching and post-literacy were also examined. Microcomputers supported with software, telephone contacts, television, mobile television, video cassettes, selective radio series, etc., were mentioned as major instructional technologies. Some successful experiments from Canada and Egypt were described, such as distance education supplemented with person-to-person contacts and post-literacy occupational programmes.

C. EVALUATION OF THE LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENT AND OF THE LARGER IMPACT OF LITERACY AND BASIC EDUCATION

(Working Group III)

1. The following seven points summarize the main themes of the discussion in the working group.

Definitions and their implications for assessment and evaluation of primary education and adult-literacy/basic-education programmes

2. An underlying theme in the discussion of Working Group III was the notion that definitions and models of literacy condition the relevance and style of assessment and evaluation processes. A distinction was also made between literacy goals at primary level and those more appropriate in adult basic-skill provision. A delegate distinguished between what might be termed 'marked place' models of literacy (which others labelled systematic evaluation) and 'learner-centred' or more humanistic models. At the adult level, these broad views of literacy models have critical implications for assessment and evaluation. Adult learners in the latter, learner-centred programmes, will not only expect to define their own goals but will also have fairly clear ideas as to whether they are successful or not in attaining them. External formal evaluation may well hinder progress and lead to discouragement or even abandonment of programmes. In this type of programme informal assessment is more appropriate. When literacy goals and definitions are externally defined, in terms of either societal standards or employability requirements, the pressure for more seemingly objective assessment is more evident. Evaluation should adopt a diagnostic approach. The learner's participation is essential, especially regarding the problem of drop-outs. The links between the needs of the individual and those of society must be observed.

Certification and its role in adult basic-skill provision

3. In a similar manner, definitions of the goals of literacy programmes have an enormous impact on the place of certificates, diplomas and the assessment procedures required to deliver them. Many in the working group argued that adult learners are the best judges of the value of certification. In learner-centred programmes whose clients have extremely fragile reading, writing and numeracy skills or none at all any form of formal sanction of progress may be counter-productive. Certification of learning achievement becomes relevant when the adult learner wishes to proceed to another level of provision or pass into a more formal learning system. A number of speakers stressed that evaluation in the broadest sense should not be tied to obtaining a certificate. The broader evaluation process should be independent and take the more global socio-economic and cultural context into consideration. Indeed, a theme running through the discussion was how, in a period of continuing economic austerity, the demand for increased financial accountability could be met in adult basic-skill programmes. Adult educators seeking to protect the diversity of learners' aspirations must also take into account the requirements of their funding sources.

4. Several delegates also made the distinction between certification and evaluation for individual needs and the type of evaluation that would monitor the success of the programmes as a whole. It was stressed that regional disparities could be identified through evaluation procedures that in no way labelled or penalized the individual learner.

The flow of information and data collection in the evaluation of primary-school-based literacy and adult-literacy programmes

5. Throughout the working group's debate concern was expressed about the flow of information on all aspects of data collection concerning education. In

many countries the issue is not a lack of evaluation instruments but rather a problem of co-ordination. In some instances a remedy might be to incorporate the evaluation component of each adult-literacy or school-based programme in the overall plan, with costing included. Indeed, the flow of information to and from schools and adult-learning centres is frequently impeded through lack of funding for this precise purpose. Other solutions based on country experience included the use of the formal school community itself to evaluate literacy progress or needs within the catchment area of a given school. Teachers and pupils were given training in assessment procedures prior to engaging in this work.

6. Many speakers stressed the importance of a continuous flow of information between learners, teachers, organizers and administrators to correct difficulties encountered in reaching individual or group targets. While on the one hand this need was widely expressed, on the other hand one delegate reminded the working group that many developing countries simply cannot afford the degree of sophistication involved in improving the flow of information. At a macro-level, these countries are fully aware of the need to improve but have limited resources available to invest in improvement.

7. Another speaker reported a recent national reading, writing and numeracy assessment of primary-school children that had been successful in identifying the learning needs of individual learners without appearing as a potential sanction of the child. Results of the national study enabled identification of priority regions in the country for further investment and, at the same time, information was relayed back to individual teachers in schools to facilitate the improvement of their classroom work. Thus, the working group shared both the inherent difficulties in improving data collection and national experience that had proved useful in overcoming some of these difficulties.

8. This discussion was linked to the question of the necessary components of an evaluation system, in that several speakers noted that, unless the various components and, in many cases, regions of a nation were effectively linked together through appropriate information flows, one would not really have a 'system'.

The need to link primary-education and adult-literacy programmes into a single system

9. While the necessity of linking the two major systems for providing literacy to a population was widely recognized, and some examples of how this was successfully done were provided, grounds for debate emerged over the extent to which differences between primary schooling and adult-literacy programmes implied different forms of evaluation. For example, some speakers argued that self-evaluation, an important aspect of adult-literacy programmes, cannot be applied to young children in primary school. Other speakers replied, in one case citing a research study, that after some experience of schooling quite young children are capable of accurate self-evaluation. This led others to note that for adult learners as well some experience of a literacy programme, and some training, was necessary before self-evaluation was feasible. It was also noted that in many primary-school systems a major function of evaluation is selection for the next level of education, often implying highly formalized examinations administered externally to the individual classroom or school. One speaker noted that in systems where most of the education officials were themselves successful competitors in such selection-oriented examinations administrators had difficulty imagining other styles of evaluation. Several speakers argued that adult-literacy programmes suffered from neither of these constraints. However, it was pointed out that when literacy programmes aim to provide access to further levels of education, or to specific sectors or levels of the labour market, some form of certification, with attendant formal external evaluation, is often seen to be

necessary. One case was cited in which such external testing was available, but only on a voluntary basis, for those adult learners who required such a certificate.

The importance of considering cost in evaluations

10. Some speakers argued that while much evaluation is aimed at assessing individual learning or improving an existing educational programme, another form aims at providing information for policy-makers when they are deciding whether or not to implement a programme, or which programme or policy to implement or expand. In the latter case, including consideration of cost in the evaluation exercise was considered crucial. The distinction was drawn between cost-benefit analysis, which uses a monetary measure of results, and cost-effectiveness analysis, which uses a broader array of outcome indicators, such as achievement levels and number of students completing a programme. The latter was suggested as more appropriate and feasible for adult-literacy programmes. Other speakers argued that such cost-based evaluation was either too complex and administratively difficult, or too expensive, or inherently inappropriate for adult-literacy programmes in developing nations. Several speakers asked for examples of successful application of cost-based evaluation of adult-literacy programmes in developing nations, and one example was provided by a participant. It was further noted that provision of significant levels of government funding for adult literacy often produced demands for 'accountability', requiring comparisons of costs and results. In such cases, decisions regarding appropriate indicators or standards of success become especially critical, as do decisions regarding whether such standards should vary across regions or population groups within a nation. Finally, it was noted that evaluation itself has a cost, which must be taken into account when designing evaluation systems.

Evaluation of impact of basic education programmes

11. Several speakers noted that when attempting to assess the impact of either primary schooling or adult-literacy programmes the choice of appropriate educational indicators was also critical, and had to be related to the broad goals and specific objectives of the programmes. Others observed that impact evaluation is a highly complex and scientifically demanding exercise, requiring very specialized skills. The need for training in this area was cited. Another speaker suggested that impact evaluation should best be done not by government ministries but by research centres or other specialized institutions whose personnel would have the requisite skills.

International assistance needed

12. Three areas where international assistance is required for improving evaluation systems were noted: (1) in-country training programmes in evaluation skills; (2) regional seminars and other activities for exchanging experience; (3) developing internationally comparable sets of educational indicators for both primary schooling and adult-literacy programmes.

D. INITIAL AND CONTINUING TRAINING OF LITERACY TEACHERS AND OF OTHER PERSONNEL IN LITERACY WORK

(Working Group IV)

1. At three meetings, held on 5 and 6 September 1990, Working Group IV discussed ways and means of training trainers and other literacy personnel. Some 60 statements provided an opportunity for a great many exchanges and observations arising out of a variety of national experience.

2. It was generally recognized that the responsibilities of adult-education teacher/literacy trainers were far more diverse and complex than those of teachers in formal primary education. In addition to their teaching function, literacy trainers act as community development workers, which calls for all-round knowledge conferring a general ability to analyse problems and take action.

3. With this in view, literacy trainers must take their place in the team of local development agents, whose programmes and action should buttress and consolidate the functional dimensions of literacy programmes. In this way the literacy programme will form part of a collective endeavour in which various resources from both the public and the private sectors serve, each in its own way, to support basic education for adults.

4. Sound initial and continuing training is essential at all levels of responsibility of literacy personnel; training needs are particularly strong in that such personnel are varied, comprising basic-literacy trainers, who are often volunteers, their supervisors, trainers, programme managers and planners and decision-making personnel.

5. However the scale of training needs for literacy personnel is often in inverse proportion to the paucity of teaching aids and materials available on the spot, for which the trainer must make up principally by using his or her imagination. In many countries adult-literacy training is provided by primary-school teachers whose initial training, which is often inadequate to start with, does not include the special features of adult educational psychology or studies of social background and community development. The importance of enlisting formal education personnel in the fight against illiteracy is such that one speaker made a point of reminding the group that the World Conference on Education for All, held in Jomtien in 1990, had in fact recommended that such personnel be systematically consulted on literacy work and participate in decision-making bodies in that area.

6. Some countries, moreover, had organized a social service scheme involving young people in literacy work; others called for short-term volunteers, in large numbers and often from widely varying backgrounds, for their literacy campaigns; lastly, the non-governmental organizations provided for adult-literacy personnel whose initial training itself varied widely.

7. It was frequently stated that universities should provide and take part in training adult-education personnel.

8. Research into adult educational psychology and the study of social backgrounds and their development were examples of areas in which university skills should contribute to the relevance of functional literacy curricula as a whole.

9. Furthermore, if universities were to standarize training modules for literacy personnel this would help to advance the process of recognizing and regularizing the different levels of training literacy personnel needed.

10. The existence or establishment of regional and local diagnostic, documentation and study centres concerned with socio-educational problems was widely regarded as a necessity for enhancing the relevance of training for literacy teachers within the framework of lifelong education and of adapting to the socio-economic realities and aspirations of the society concerned. These centres should also be responsible for the requisite interaction between universities and field staff.

11. Most speakers recognized the fact that illiteracy in both developing and industrialized countries was a societal problem and called for a joint national and community approach.

12. The demands of literacy usually induced the most disadvantaged countries to make maximum use of available teachers, particularly primary-school teachers, and to call systematically upon all who had some book learning, even if they had received no initial training in adult education. Consequently, in-service and continuing training were the only immediate ways of making good the deficiency, but a tendency to include an adult-education and social-background study element in the initial training of primary-school teachers was emerging.

13. The industrialized countries' approach was more exacting in providing specific initial and continuing training for adult-education teachers, often highly specialized and targeted on minorities, given that illiteracy was a residual phenomenon of resistance to universal primary schooling. In that context, knowledge of and respect for the widely varying cultural dimensions of the problem were essential components of initial training. Subsequent continuing training based on differing models guaranteed the flexible approach that was needed in adult-education, which went far beyond the notion of retraining and endowed training personnel with the versatility needed in lifelong education. In this respect some delegations from the industrialized countries stressed the importance of recognizing the value of knowledge acquired on the job by adult-education teachers and of according it standard recognition in relation to so-called formal education.

14. The working group concurred in the view that the motivation of trainers was just as important for the success of literacy programmes as for that of learners and depended on both internal and external factors.

15. Personal, religious, philosophical, political and other convictions frequently enhanced the sense of solidarity and the desire for community development on which many literacy programmes were based, in both industrialized and developing countries.

16. Several speakers pointed out that consultation of teachers, as leading agents in literacy programmes, was a key factor in ensuring motivation and the effectiveness of programmes.

17. A major source of external motivation of literacy personnel was public recognition of their work, primarily in the community - and possibly also at national level - as regards certification of their competence.

18. The advantages in cash or in kind that were rightly enjoyed by those who devoted their time and energy to community development were not to be underrated as an external source of motivation. In this connection, one speaker noted that the standards required of adult-literacy teachers in terms of skills and training failed to take sufficient account of the financial implications of those requirements.

19. Women - both learners and trainers - were a particularly well-motivated group. Special attention should be given to the particular situation of women in training programmes, though without neglecting men.

20. The paragraph concerning the basic facilities needed for training trainers was generally viewed as a comment on the utilization of existing structures such as primary schools, community buildings, business and association premises, etc., although the image associated with some of these buildings, such as primary schools, might sometimes generate resistance among adults. Media and distance education schemes were an effective means of

establishing a closely knit network among these facilities and providing local literacy personnel with essential in-service training.

21. The development of international co-operation should help to consolidate basic facilities, which often fell short of needs, and improve them - to the benefit of education for all - on the eve of the third millennium.

E. FUNCTIONAL LITERACY AND CONTINUING EDUCATION: ISSUES PERTAINING TO INDUSTRIALIZED AS WELL AS DEVELOPING COUNTRIES
(Working Group V)

1. The question of functional literacy has been growing in importance in recent years and has attracted considerable attention in all countries. It is a dynamic and complex issue, inter alia because it has only recently come to light and because studies of the problem, begun only in recent years, have barely scratched the surface. The group agreed that UNESCO and the UNESCO Institute for Education in Hamburg had taken valuable steps to ascertain the causes of the problem and to promote the evaluation and spread of the lifelong-education project throughout the world. The group focused on section 5 of document ED/BIE/CONFINTED 42/3, paragraphs 96 to 105. It was in general agreement with its lines of emphasis but enriched its content with new approaches and interpretations, adding descriptions of specific experiences and new topics. The group's discussions covered the following points.

Definition of functional illiteracy

2. Some speakers referred to the need to make further headway in defining the problem and pinpointing its causes. Others mentioned the urgency of redefining the very concept of functional illiteracy in order to reflect the major changes that had occurred in the last few decades. It was further noted that working definitions of functional illiteracy varied from country to country and that specific social, cultural and economic contexts should therefore be taken into account.

Austerity and lack of resources for functional-literacy programmes

3. A large number of speakers mentioned difficulties in channelling resources into functional-literacy and continuing-education work. In some countries funds were available for literacy and primary-education programmes but not for the post-literacy programmes that should go with them. Other members related experiences of their own in getting employers, the private sector and trade unions to provide funds for post-literacy programmes for workers with inadequate functional-literacy - programmes that benefited both worker and employer. Other countries were in the process of revising legislation with a view to allocating financial resources to continuing-education programmes. One European industralized country had introduced a scheme whereby firms allotted 1.5 per cent of their payroll to educational facilities for the workers. It was stressed that since the problem was one affecting the whole of society (public sector, industry, communities, etc.), society as a whole should participate in financing solutions. It was therefore necessary to work towards a change of attitude throughout society so that support and adequate financial resources were provided for functional-literacy and lifelong-education programmes.

Learning aids for functional-literacy programmes

4. Speakers from both industrialized and developing countries drew attention to the need for improved learning aids for functional-literacy and

continuing-education programmes. Almost all countries underlined the importance of designing aids that were suited to the cultural and working environment of the adults taking part in the programmes, noting the connection between the quality of materials and the results achieved. Some speakers referred to specific cases. One, for example, spoke of the work of the Asian Cultural Centre for UNESCO in designing and distributing learning aids and games for some Asian countries. Canada mentioned the importance of reading materials and of using care in designing and distributing materials. China drew attention to the need to relate the content of reading and audiovisual material and booklets to the everyday concerns of learners. Other speakers, from both developed and developing countries, noted the importance of incorporating themes relating to health, well-being, nutrition and other adult concerns in functional-literacy material. Although the need for proper aids was more urgent in developing countries, the industrialized countries also attached importance to the production of more relevant and appropriate reading materials and teaching aids for functional-literacy work.

Pooling experience and improving international co-operation

5. A considerable number of speakers urged UNESCO to promote or develop channels for exchanging experience in functional-literacy and continuing-education programmes. Although joint regional projects had been set up in some continents (for example Asia and Europe) the scale of the problem of functional illiteracy and the urgent need to take action to deal with it called for better knowledge and exploitation of the successful schemes carried out in some countries. It had to be borne in mind, however, that those schemes were intended for specific social contexts. It was noted that UNESCO's study centres (especially that in Hamburg) could play an important role in spreading information about successful schemes, methods and strategies and could establish information and exchange networks among different countries, especially those with common problems, taking care to include co-operation between industrialized and developing countries. In this connection, one speaker mentioned a number of international comparative studies of functional-illiteracy rates in different countries and suggested that UNESCO should take the lead in this type of research. Another speaker mentioned his country's assistance to developing countries in training literacy teachers and adult educators.

Promotion of study and research on the characteristics of functional illiteracy

6. Many speakers stressed the urgent need to make a deeper study and diagnostic analysis of functional illiteracy and urged UNESCO to continue to lead research in that field. The speakers took time to examine some of the causes of functional illiteracy. One delegate referred to the role of the school and highlighted problems relating to the quality of primary education, its limited links with the world of work and the consequences of failure at school during basic education (repetition, dropping out, etc.). Other speakers drew attention to the absence of machinery to provide continuous education for literates, the lack of relevance of teaching materials, the difficulty of arousing enthusiasm in the newly literate to make further efforts to raise their level of education, unemployment, inadequate methods for teaching adults, etc. Other speakers considered that the responsibility for functional literacy lay with society as a whole, since it was a problem that concerned the production sector, the state and national culture. Others referred to the inadequacy of basic-education programmes for children as the only machinery for eradicating illiteracy, and urged countries to strengthen special programmes for lifelong adult education that contained components relevant to adults and their personal and social development. A delegate from one industrialized country described his country's policy of enhancing

early-childhood (pre-primary) education and ensuring that all children received the education they needed to participate actively in modern life, with its increasing complexity.

Women's role in functional-literacy programmes

7. Some speakers stressed the importance for women of achieving equality of access to education, including literacy programmes, and the role being played by women in literacy education, especially for children. It was observed that in most cases women played an important and constructive role, in that as they reached a higher level of literacy their children obtained better results in school. Literate women also brought about greater success in other social programmes such as health, nutrition, child care, family planning and community organization. On the other hand, literacy education for men also helped to promote literacy among women. Speakers described situations in which a high correlation between literacy in women and literacy in men had been observed. Some speakers recommended mobilizing women's organizations through UNESCO in order to facilitate access to literacy education by women, their families and their communities.

F. ESTABLISHING NEW AND MORE EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS; MANAGEMENT AND MOBILIZATION OF RESOURCES TO ENSURE EDUCATION FOR ALL
(Working Group VI)

1. The group examined the points raised in paragraphs 106 to 110 of the working document ED/BIE/CONFINTED 42/3, and particularly the questions contained in paragraph 111; it was also expected to discuss the relevant amendments to the preliminary Draft Recommendation No. 77 (ED/BIE/CONFINTED 42/4 prov.).

2. Based on the issues raised in the working document, the discussion was structured around the following points: (a) partnerships; (b) political will and motivation; (c) volunteers and non-governmental organizations; (d) the media; (e) mobilizing financial resources; and (f) international and regional co-operation.

3. Although governments bear by far the greatest responsibility in achieving the object of eradicating illiteracy, many speakers stated clearly that for both formal and non-formal education the ministry of education was not alone. It was necessary to form a multitude of partnerships with other ministries, with industry, with universities, with international organizations, with trade unions, with non-governmental organizations and with the people at the grass-roots level. Failure to involve the local communities could lead to a loss of confidence in educational activities, while the population itself, when properly motivated and mobilized, could play a major role in the success of a literacy campaign, and massive involvement could lead to cost savings for the authorities. To encourage real partnership in multilingual societies, each language should have its own official status. Some speakers gave examples of national structures for combating illiteracy.

4. However, there was no escaping the fact that effective motivation for literacy at the central level was the single greatest factor in success. Governments should endeavour to make the greatest effort. In this context, speakers drew attention to the lack of co-operation between ministries in achieving specific objectives: the first step should be to co-ordinate their plans before seeking the involvement of the education system, business

and the general public. At this stage it is important to raise the awareness of local communities. Meetings should be held at all levels to tell everyone that the literate worker is an asset - not least to himself or herself - and that the results of family-planning campaigns are closely linked to the level of literacy among women. Every ministry of education should set up an adult-education unit, where these do not already exist, and an impetus should be given by such measures as special educational taxes, tax relief to enterprises conducting literacy courses, and donations for literacy from local government. But, despite the political will, more financial help is needed to promote literacy courses.

5. Achievements in literacy drives will benefit from greater involvement of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The non-governmental organizations - both national and international - are ready to help if given the resources, while their mobilization will contribute to bridging financial and personnel shortcomings in present literacy programmes. One speaker gave details of how volunteers were rewarded for their contribution to literacy - not necessarily financially. There was a move by some NGOs to set up an education-for-all network that would stress the partnership between governments and NGOs. Other opinions drew attention to the fact that such schemes are expensive and time-consuming. Finally, one delegate noted that national NGOs are not very widespread in precisely those countries where they would be most useful. Existing criteria for support from UNESCO might be reviewed in order to promote the work of such NGOs. A suggestion was made that UNESCO convene a meeting to discuss how to help NGOs shoulder the role foreseen for them in the documents adopted at the World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien.

6. With some exceptions, very few remarks were made about the role of the media, particularly the involvement of artists, writers and journalists, in achieving the objectives of literacy campaigns.

7. Many references were made to the burden of debt repayments and what could be done to combat this problem. One delegate asked whether some of the funds used for debt servicing could be converted to the service of education, as long as proper accounting for their use was respected. It was pointed out that business and industry in developing countries do not necessarily generate the kinds of revenue that can be used to supplement educational activities. Ways should be found of increasing efficiency, and it was suggested that some successful international development programmes (not necessarily in the field of education) should provide inspiration for mechanisms showing how funds have been used effectively. Several delegates drew attention to the Recommendation of the International Congress on Planning and Management of Educational Development (Mexico, March 1990) and its appeal to governments and UNESCO to intensify and diversify their efforts to satisfy the needs of basic education for all in the context of follow-up to the Jomtien Conference.

8. The World Conference on Education for All (Jomtien, Thailand, March 1990) represented a watershed for regional and international co-operation, since it now seemed that the offer of greater co-operation actually preceded the demand for it on the part of Member States. It was noted that UNESCO was not a funding agency: its role in the development process should be catalytic. It was suggested that developed countries should show more interest towards supporting the cause of literacy in developing countries and that financial assistance should be independent of political considerations. There is a need for interregional co-operation at the intellectual level to share useful experience, and comparative studies on these innovations should be carried out. One suggestion was the setting up of an international fund for the eradication of illiteracy, for the benefit of developing countries, while another speaker mentioned that the aspects of human solidarity and moral support should not be overlooked in international relations.

9. It was pointed out that even though the working document mentioned the joint ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers (1966) there was no reference to it in preliminary Draft Recommendation No. 77.

CLOSING MEETING OF THE COMMISSION

1. The Commission reconvened to review the reports of its working groups and to consider the revisions to 'Draft Recommendation No. 77 to Ministries of Education concerning the struggle against illiteracy: policies, strategies and operational programmes for the 1990s'. The Chairman invited the Rapporteur of the Commission and a representative of each of the six working groups to briefly present their reports to the Commission. The working group reports were presented by Ms K. Solholm (Norway), Mr Lascelles Lewis (Jamaica), Mr Joseph Farrell (Canada), Mr A. Moreno Montero (Spain), Mr V. Onushkin (USSR) and Mr Abdel Fattah Galal (Egypt). The Chairman of the Drafting Committee thanked the respective groups for their valuable contributions to the Committee's deliberations. After considering comments and corrections submitted by five delegates, the Commission took note of its report and unanimously recommended it to the Conference for adoption.

2. A suggestion was put forward that with the aid of journalists the report be edited in a form that would make its important conclusions accessible to a wide public. The Director of the International Bureau of Education noted this suggestion and stated that he would seek to find the resources needed to implement it.

3. The Chairman of the Drafting Committee then explained the process by which Draft Recommendation No. 77 had been revised to take into account the 121 draft amendments proposed by delegates. He emphasized that the six regional groups were represented in the Drafting Committee and had reached unanimous agreement on all proposals. The Commission then proceeded to consider and amend Draft Recommendation No. 77, which it recommended to the Conference for adoption.

PART III

RECOMMENDATION NO. 77 TO MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION ON THE STRUGGLE AGAINST ILLITERACY: OPERATIONAL POLICIES, STRATEGIES AND PROGRAMMES FOR THE 1990s

PREAMBLE

The International Conference on Education, convened by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, meeting in Geneva at its 42nd session from 3 to 8 September 1990,

Noting the decision taken by the United Nations General Assembly to entrust the implementation of International Literacy Year to UNESCO,

Recalling UNESCO's role - in keeping with its mission - in the fight against illiteracy and for the universalization of primary education,

Welcoming the absolute priority assigned by UNESCO's General Conference at its twenty-fifth session to education for all, both in its third Medium-Term Plan and in the Plan of Action it adopted for the eradication of illiteracy, especially among girls and women,

Endorsing the World Declaration on Education for All and *noting* the Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs, adopted by the World Conference on Education for All (Jomtien, Thailand, 5-9 March 1990) organized by the World Bank, UNDP, UNESCO and UNICEF, and *recalling* the priority to be given to the developing countries, in particular to the least developed among them,

Convinced of the urgent need systematically to follow up the World Conference on Education for All and of the specific role UNESCO has to play in following it up,

Having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to all the relevant conventions, recommendations and declarations adopted at the regional and international levels, particularly by UNESCO,

Convinced that the development of education for all is of crucial importance in the fight against poverty, malnutrition, disease, socio-economic marginalization and drugs,

Convinced that education for all is an essential condition for the all-round development of individuals and their families, for achieving gender justice and equality and for guaranteeing a better quality of life for all,

Recognizing that in most cases there has been an increase in enrolment ratios in primary schools and adult-literacy courses in the last 25 years, and *noting*, nevertheless, that the absolute number of illiterates in many developing countries is still rising,

Noting that access to schooling is not yet fully available to all, that drop-out rates in primary education remain high in many countries and that sizeable proportions of school drop-outs and neoliterate adults relapse into illiteracy or are not sufficiently competent in reading, writing or computation, Aware of the fact that various communities have to face major obstacles - such as a growing foreign debt, an unfavourable trade balance, deterioration of the environment or a high level of military expenditure - that have an adverse effect on the achievement of indispensable large-scale primary-education and adult-literacy programmes,

Recognizing the need for practical action at the national level to achieve education for all,

Also recognizing the importance in the 1990s of collective and concerted international action,

Adopts, on 8 September 1990, and submits for consideration by the ministries responsible for literacy and primary education and other appropriate authorities and agencies in Member States, the institutions within the United Nations system with responsibilities in this field and the intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations concerned, the following Recommendation:

A. PRINCIPLES, CONCEPTS AND OBJECTIVES

1. The right to education is a fundamental one on which depend the personal, social and economic well-being and cultural development of all children, adolescents and adults. Literacy, pre-primary and primary education constitute an indispensable stage in the larger process of lifelong learning and human development.

2. With a view to making education accessible to all children, all adolescents and all adults a comprehensive approach should be adopted, consisting simultaneously and interactively in the provision of (i) literacy programmes for adolescents and adults - both women and men - and (ii) educational and training programmes designed to meet other basic needs.

3. The complete eradication of illiteracy calls for the universal provision of high-quality primary education. When promoting primary education, links should be made with learning in the family from a very early age and with pre-school education, so that all children have the possibility of attaining a satisfactory level of achievement.

4. Those children who are not integrated into the formal school system should no longer remain outside the learning system. The setting up of non-formal, non-conventional, innovative and flexible structures is a positive response to the formal system provided that such structures are not of a lower standard than those in the formal schools, which they should complement.

5. The acquisition of basic knowledge and skills, attitudes and values can be successful and lasting only if it forms an integral part of lifelong education.

6. The content of literacy and basic education is specific to geographical, social and cultural contexts and should evolve with time as societies change.

7. Competence in reading, writing and arithmetic forms the core of any process of education or training whose ethical basis is the goal of generating awareness, acumen and the concept of cultural identity and developing the critical faculties. Literacy programmes, understood in this perspective, include not only basic skills (reading, writing and arithmetic) but also understanding of the world and the ability to play a role in bringing it towards greater justice and equity.

B. PRACTICAL MEASURES AND PROGRAMMES AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

8. To develop literacy and basic education for all, countries should:

(a) express a firm national political will to eradicate illiteracy by establishing priorities and objectives and by expanding the physical facilities, where necessary, so as to broaden access to education;

(b) generate awareness among the entire population and encourage involvement by local communities and individuals themselves;

(c) conduct a diagnostic analysis of the present position and past experience regarding literacy education and primary education, especially in the context of the socio-economic and cultural dynamics of society;

(d) determine people's basic education needs in the light of local conditions;

(e) set specific, time-bound targets for the present decade, giving the most urgent priority to the task of ensuring access to, and improving the quality of, education for girls and women and removing every obstacle that hampers their active participation;

(f) adopt organizational, structural, financial, social and legal measures and well-defined implementable strategies, backed by financial and human resources, that are specific and likely to provide a real opportunity to attain those objectives;

(g) attach the highest importance to the quality and follow-up of educational services, placing emphasis on the successful outcome of the learning process;

(h) take a broad approach in identifying potential learner groups and in encouraging recruitment efforts among members of peer groups, workplace colleagues and others within the learner's natural milieu;

(i) link literacy with relevant community-development activities such as health and nutrition, child care and pre-school education, family welfare, in particular child welfare, the raising of productivity, income generation, environmental protection, peace, human rights, fundamental freedoms, preparation for transition to the world of work and participation in economic, civic and cultural life;

(j) create a suitable framework and machinery for monitoring and evaluation to provide information likely to promote progress towards literacy goals;

(k) establish new and more effective partnerships among all those concerned at the national, regional and international levels in the planning, implementation and management of programmes, in order to enhance integration and co-ordination of efforts for increased cost-effectiveness and a more significant impact;

(l) encourage by appropriate means research, which is one of the fundamental underpinnings for the renewal of policies, strategies, structures, content and methods.

9. For achieving time-bound targets during the 1990s, one of the essential steps to be taken is to review existing literacy strategies and incorporate the necessary modifications. When renewing these strategies, the following measures, among others, may be considered:

(a) in order to achieve universal literacy, an interactive two-track approach should be encouraged: (i) extension of pre-primary and primary education and enhancement of their quality, inter alia through the development of or improvements in teacher training; (ii) promoting adult literacy and continuing education. This twofold approach should be firmly integrated into lifelong education;

(b) the quality and relevance of primary education should be improved, so as to avoid any relapse into illiteracy in any form whatever. The new strategy should therefore aim to ensure not only full school enrolment but also satisfactory progress through primary schooling and its completion with an adequate mastery of basic knowledge and skills;

(c) dropping-out and wastage from primary school should be drastically reduced and eventually eliminated, and regular attendance ensured by both administrative and social measures such as effective supervision and guidance, consultation with parents, active co-operation on the part of the local community, the provision of child care and support services for girls, the provision of midday meals and other incentives where feasible and the creation of a climate of awareness among the population, through the media and other means;

(d) for out-of-school children additional, flexible, non-formal arrangements for basic education should be made. Adequate infrastructures, possibly assisted by the school system, should be created to ensure their effectiveness. The curriculum, instructional methods and timetables should be adjusted to suit the learning needs and priorities of out-of-school children;

(e) for adult education, a process of decentralization combined with national or other appropriate co-ordination mechanisms should be followed. Local communities should be encouraged to determine their own goals and responsibilities in precise terms;

(f) voluntary organizations should be encouraged to co-operate closely with governmental agencies in literacy work at different levels;

(g) co-operation with the media should be sought, with a view to producing a social will among the population, motivating potential learners to participate in literacy programmes, creating and sustaining political will and mobilizing financial and human resources;

(h) a systematic procedure for monitoring progress at different levels and in respect of different functions - administrative, financial and educational - should be instituted on reliable bases in primary education - both formal and non-formal - and in adult-literacy, post-literacy and continuing-education programmes.

10. An effective policy for the elimination of disparities between men's and women's literacy rates and between boys' and girls' access to primary schooling should be formulated, with time-bound targets and in co-operation, inter alia, with women's organizations.

11. Decisions of the same kind should be taken concerning other specific groups such as urban slum-dwellers, the rural poor, cultural and linguistic minorities and the handicapped.

12. In multilingual situations, the policy regarding the language of literacy should be carefully formulated, especially where the national or official language is different from local languages. Use of the mother tongue is desirable. However, in some situations bilingual literacy should be encouraged.

Content and methods

13. In order to identify the functional objectives and content of literacy and basic education for children and adults a procedure of needs assessment should be followed. Programmes of basic education should be conceived as a means for meeting the basic learning needs of all and strengthening learners' motivation through direct linkage with the concerns of their daily life.

14. The involvement and participation of young people and adults - the potential participants in literacy programmes - in identifying and structuring basic learning needs should be promoted, so that learning becomes more meaningful to them and their motivation is enhanced.

15. In order to increase the relevance of programme content, various environmental and contextual factors should be taken into account over and above the identification of learners' needs. These factors may be of occupational, geographical, gender-related status, cultural, technological or other relevance.

16. As an integral part of continuing-literacy education programmes of post-literacy, functional-literacy and lifelong education should support the continuation of learning in various areas in accordance with needs assessment, using literacy skills as learning skills and the application of learning to various situations for personal, social and economic development.

17. In devising teaching and learning methods, designing instructional material and using educational technologies and media a distinction should be made between adult-learning and child-learning methods. The quality of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials should be continually upgraded through evaluation of the education system in its entirety.

18. Educational technologies, including new technologies, should complement the teacher's work. New educational technologies, when available, - microcomputers, specially designed television programmes, video and audio cassettes, etc. - might be judiciously used for both instructional and motivational purposes in combination with analytical and interpretative discussion. Where appropriate, new computer and communications technologies might also be utilized for distance-education purposes to bring literacy and educational programmes to those living in rural and remote areas.

19. Teaching and learning procedures should be made more dynamic by increasing the use of methods such as dialogue and peer-teaching, participatory learning in small groups, and self-instruction. All these should increase the motivation, autonomy and self-confidence of the learner and the competence of the teacher. The atmosphere of adult-literacy classes should be made more pleasant and attractive, and local creative and cultural activities

should be introduced to provide an incentive for learners to continue attending the classes.

20. A sound infrastructure, with flexible and dynamic modes of functioning, should be set up for non-formal programmes of adult literacy, post literacy and functional literacy, and for non-formal education at the primary level for out-of-school children. The development of non-formal education, an emerging field in certain countries, should be considered part of adult-education structures, in conjunction with industries, social service agencies, agricultural extension units and the like.

Evaluation of learners' achievement and the larger social impact

21. Evaluation in relation to literacy and the continuing education of adults should be an encouraging process designed to make those concerned aware of their progress and to help them to identify gaps in their knowledge. It should be one of the important and integral elements of all literacy programmes and would serve to improve them. An appropriate scheme of cumulative evaluation should be planned and executed with this in mind. Efforts should be made to award a certificate upon successful completion of a literacy course.

22. Evaluation should typically include: (a) assessment of learner achievement; (b) curriculum evaluation; (c) monitoring of programme implementation to optimize its efficiency and effectiveness; (d) a comprehensive programme review from time to time to renew and strengthen programme objectives, organization and management, channels of communication, institutional efficiency, etc.; (e) cost evaluation; and (f) impact evaluation to understand and optimize the effects of literacy learning on the life of the learner, on his or her family, and on the local community and society.

23. A plan of progress monitoring should be introduced, particularly in the early stages of the programme, since it is the implementation stage that is weakest and beset with unforeseen obstacles, problems and bottlenecks that vitiate the final results of even a well-planned literacy drive. By periodically observing progress in carrying out educational, administrative and financial functions at the national, intermediary and local levels, a good monitoring system should locate shortfalls in implementation and enable timely corrective measures to be taken to optimize the results of the programme, thereby ensuring its success.

24. The impact evaluation of literacy and basic education at individual and collective levels should demonstrate how, within specific contexts and conditions, education and training contribute to better health and hygiene, longer life expectancy, lower infant mortality, greater participation in immunization programmes, better child care, improved family income, greater self-confidence and autonomy, greater social, economic and cultural participation, and full enjoyment of civic rights and responsibilities. Understanding the factors that produce these consequences is critical for achieving national development goals.

Initial and continuing training of teachers and other educational personnel

25. The training of men and women teachers is one of the main components of high-quality primary education. In some Member States it would be useful if that training also covered adult education so as to enable primary-school teachers, if necessary, to carry out certain teaching tasks in that area. Innovative steps should be taken in recruitment and specific training, leading to professional mobility for well-motivated teachers and utilization of the skills acquired in the field by literacy workers.

26. The variety of tasks given to literacy workers requires them to possess special skills. They should therefore be provided with a sound specific training, including an introduction to educational theory, reflection and practical experience in the teaching of adults. The same considerations should apply to those in charge of management, inspection, curriculum preparation and other tasks of an educational nature.

27. In order to maintain the quality and efficiency of the entire programme, all staff should be given in-service training. In addition, distance-learning programmes, journals, newsletters and other such means should be made available to promote the self-instruction and continuing education of literacy teachers, trainers and other educational personnel. Higher-education establishments, faculties of education and regional training centres that collaborate with UNESCO, such as CREFAL and ASFEC, and national training centres should take part in the initial and recurrent training of teachers and functionaries working in the area of literacy.

28. In recognition of the key role of teachers in any educational activity, their social status, living conditions and remuneration should receive the active support of the authorities in line with Article 7 of the World Declaration on Education for All, paragraph 33 of the Framework for Action and the joint UNESCO/ILO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers, so that they can devote their full attention to education and thereby avoid wastage of their potential through the need to look for alternative means of subsistence.

Functional literacy and continuing education

29. Awareness-raising campaigns and existing facilities in all industrialized and developing countries should be substantially expanded to meet the basic learning needs of all adults. A systematic, research-based investigation of the question should seek to identify groups and individuals with inadequate schooling, including migrant workers and their families, whose linguistic and cultural identity should be respected, to determine the numbers involved and establish reliable statistical data. The nature and scope of the basic learning needs of these different groups and individuals should also be identified in relation to cumulative factors such as unemployment, poverty, social marginalization, etc. Changing employment patterns, demographic trends and evolving technology make these needs recurrent, generating a continuing demand for basic learning skills in the form of flexible and abiding educational services that call for a long-term commitment on the part of the authorities, in both industrialized and developing countries.

30. Adult-literacy work in industrialized and developing countries should receive sustained core funding by the public sector and should continue to be diversified to meet the specific needs of individuals and groups. Teaching partnerships should be developed with the formal education system, including post-secondary institutions, training programmes at work and community-based programmes. In addition, partnerships at the institutional level should be developed with the various ministries (education, labour, agriculture, etc.), firms, local authorities, communities, the voluntary sector and other non-governmental agencies. Where it does not already exist, machinery should be established at the national, regional and local levels to guide research, improve the quantity and quality of services and ensure that appropriate systems for practical local action receive adequate support.

31. In all countries, a greater investment should be made in research so as to determine how best to raise the level of the fundamental skills of the population. Universities and other agencies should contribute in this area.

32. Industrialized and developing countries should share their experience concerning common concerns with respect to the development of appropriate programmes to meet the needs of their populations: concerns relating to language of instruction, highly dispersed populations, regions of extreme poverty, the diversity of groups with literacy needs, etc.

C. REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

33. Envisaging a decade of worldwide literacy action, the General Conference of UNESCO, at its twenty-fourth session (1987), appealed to Member States and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to take immediate measures to prepare programmes and activities for International Literacy Year in the context of the Plan of Action for the Eradication of Illiteracy by the Year 2000. Taking this and other international and national developments into account, it is recommended that UNESCO, together with its Member States, should take further concerted action towards the eradication of illiteracy and the provision of education for all in this decade. UNESCO, in close co-operation with its Member States and the other organizations of the United Nations system, should take action throughout the decade to achieve basic education for all with a view to eradicating illiteracy and universalizing education.

34. While strengthening co-ordination and co-operation among the partners within countries themselves and making maximum use of their international resources, Member States should also take into account the possibility of financial support created as a consequence of the World Conference on Education for All held in Thailand in March 1990. Taking this development into consideration, Member States should strengthen and further develop bilateral, regional and international co-operation with a view to adopting and implementing renewed policies and strategies for education for all and participate actively in UNESCO's regional programmes and projects established to achieve this goal by collective effort. They should also provide necessary support for the regional networks for educational research, innovation and development that have been working towards improving the quality of basic education.

35. UNESCO's existing action to promote literacy and universal primary education in the least-developed countries, in particular through the regional programmes in Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, Asia and the Pacific and the Arab States, should be strengthened.

36. In the context of the undertaking of a study on the possibility of a European co-operation programme, recommended by the General Conference of UNESCO at its twenty-fifth session, it would be desirable to submit a report on illiteracy problems in the Europe region. The report should be written in co-operation with other international institutions, networks and non-governmental organizations and should take their activities into account.

37. At a time when International Literacy Year (ILY) has generated a psychological moment for action with renewed commitment many developing countries are not in a position to make sufficient progress, on account of financial shortages; the burden of foreign debt, rising interest payments on that debt and various other economic factors have hampered their educational growth. Their need for support in the way of instructional material, the training of personnel, exchanges of innovative experience and a supply

of funds should therefore be seriously considered by bilateral donor agencies and other multilateral and international financing agencies. In this context, donor agencies and beneficiary countries could together consider redefining their priorities, simplifying where possible their procedure for technical co-operation and redirecting some of the funds now used for debt servicing by developing countries to the financing of basic education.

38. UNESCO, as the agency responsible for implementing ILY and an international organization dedicated to education, should endeavour to:

(a) help Member States, on request, to draw up their plan of action for education for all;

(b) strengthen its operational capacity and the implementation of concerted action with other organizations UNICEF, UNDP, the World Bank, bilateral agencies, NGOs, etc.) in the field, in line with the World Declaration on Education for All and the Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs;

(c) promote the training of personnel on a larger scale in the areas of planning and management, curriculum preparation and instruction, research and evaluation and other related areas, in order to raise the quality of work in literacy and basic education in Member States through formal and non-formal approaches;

(d) in each country where massive illiteracy persists, initiate, at the request of the government, appropriate programmes and projects;

(e) organize information dissemination, exchanges of experts and exchanges of ideas and materials through seminars and workshops for different functionaries in Member States and through the establishment and strengthening of regional and international networks for exchanging information;

(f) strengthen the capacity of its Regional Offices and international institutes, namely IBE, IIEP and UIE, so as to be able to stimulate research, innovation and evaluation programmes in Member States;

(g) foster closer co-operation among Member States themselves through its regional innovation networks, Regional Offices and international institutes such as the Asian Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU), the Regional Centre for Adult Education and Functional Literacy for Latin America (CREFAL) and the Arab Literacy and Adult Education Organization (ARLO);

(h) promote co-operation among non-governmental organizations operating at different levels and seek their partnership and involvement in the Organization's activities in this field;

(i) create mechanisms during the 1990s, in co-operation with Member States and the demographic services of the United Nations, for improving the reliability of statistics on literacy and for monitoring progress in different regions and internationally, in order to inform Member States and others periodically about the progress being made concerning education for all, any obstacles or bottlenecks being experienced in any region or subregion and the modifications in plans and programmes needed to achieve the targets set for the decade;

(j) carry out an evaluation on a global scale of the impact of International Literacy Year, with a view to stimulating further action during the remainder of the decade;

(k) provide Member States and appropriate non-governmental organizations, at their request, with information and assistance in order to find external sources of financing for their major programmes and projects aimed at the reduction of illiteracy and the promotion of basic education.

39. The International Bureau of Education, in co-operation and co-ordination with other units of UNESCO, should:

(a) carry out follow-up activities to this Conference and advise Member States, on request, on ways and means of implementing this Recommendation in the light of experience gathered from other countries - both developing and industrialized;

(b) further step up its documentation work and the worldwide dissemination of publications on literacy and education for all;

(c) conduct comparative surveys and monitor the progress made by different Member States and regions towards 'education for all' by the year 2000, making use for this purpose of, inter alia, the documents of the World Conference on Education for All, for which it is the repository, and the information gleaned from national reports;

(d) assist developing countries through the organization of training programmes for the setting up of regional and national documentation-exchange networks;

(e) produce more 'Literacy Lessons' in different languages and disseminate them widely throughout the 1990s.

40. The Conference recommends that a preliminary report on the implementation of this Recommendation be submitted to the International Conference on Education at its 43rd session.

ANNEX I

Agenda

1. Opening of the Conference

2. Election of the Chairman

3. Election of the Vice-Chairs and Rapporteur of the Conference

4. Adoption of the agenda (ED/BIE/CONFINTED 42/1)

5. Draft amendment to the Rules of Procedure of the International Conference on Education (ED/BIE/CONFINTED 42/5)

6. Organization of the work of the Conference (ED/BIE/CONFINTED 42/2)

7. Education for all: renewed policies and strategies for the 1990s (plenary theme) (ED/BIE/CONFINTED 42/3)

8. The struggle against illiteracy through universal primary education and adult education: operational aspects emphasizing the active participation of the learner (ED/BIE/CONFINTED 42/3) (Commission)

   8.1 Formal and non-formal primary education and adult literacy: concerted action to achieve education for all (Working Group 1)

   8.2 Literacy and post-literacy programmes: relevance, quality and functionality of the content; instructional methods, materials and technologies (Working Group 2)

   8.3 Evaluation of the learners' achievement and of the larger impact of literacy and basic education (Working Group 3)

   8.4 Initial and continuing training of literacy teachers and of other personnel in literacy work (Working Group 4)

   8.5 Functional literacy and continuing education: issues pertaining to industrialized as well as developing countries (Working Group 5)

   8.6 Establishing new and more effective partnerships; management and mobilization of resources to ensure education for all (Working Group 6)

9. Adoption of Recommendation No. 77 addressed to the Ministers of Education (ED/BIE/CONFINTED 42/4 Prov.)

10. Adoption of the Final Report

11. Closure of the Conference

    Prize-giving ceremony for the International Literacy Awards

ANNEX II

Opening address by Mr Ahmed Fathi Sorour, Minister of Education of the Arab Republic of Egypt, Chairman of the 41st session of the International Conference on Education

Distinguished Ministers,
Distinguished Heads and Members of Delegations,
Mr Director-General of UNESCO,
Mr Chairman of the Council of the International
    Bureau of Education,
Mr Director of the International Bureau of Education,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to open this 42nd session of the International Conference on Education, a Conference that has made a valuable contribution to education in recent years by denoting successive sessions to the different steps in the educational ladder: primary education at its 39th session, secondary education at its 40th session and higher education at its 41st session. But this comprehensive coverage of all levels does not preclude further discussion of educational problems in a changing world, a world overwhelmed with constantly evolving individual and collective needs and faced with many daunting challenges.

The Conference beginning today has been convened to discuss a subject with extremely important and serious implications for the future of all forms of development in the modern world, that is to say literacy through universal primary education and adult education.

This subject has been of major interest to UNESCO since its foundation, as it represents the corner-stone of the Organization's activities in the fields of education, culture, science and communication. Moreover, the importance of this Conference is enhanced by the fact that it follows the World Conference on Education for All, which was held in Jomtien (Thailand) in March 1990 with the aim of strengthening political commitment and channelling it in useful directions, mobilizing resources for literacy and universalizing primary education. The main aim of your own Conference is to identify national measures and programmes, content and methods conducive to the attainment of this objective at the national and international levels.

It is an honour for me to attend this important Conference, which will alert the international community to the importance of dealing effectively with one of the major challenges facing it. In 1989 the President of Egypt - the country that I have the honour to represent - proclaimed the 1990s a decade of literacy and adult education.

The struggle against illiteracy, which is the theme of our Conference focuses our attention on the importance of universalizing both primary and adult education.

In this connection, I should like to highlight three key aspects of our task:

(1) the search for new approaches to literacy work;

(2) the enlarging of the concept of illiteracy;

(3) the cultural dimensions of literacy.

With regard to new approaches to literacy work, the ever-increasing number of illiterates in the world calls for an all-out creative effort to devise appropriate ways of tackling this problem during the next decade. Moreover, illiteracy should not be treated as an exclusively technical problem but rather as an issue to be dealt with in long-term plans and in the light of society's constantly changing and evolving needs. Due attention should also be paid to the distinctive characteristics of urban, industrial and rural communities within the same country. The existence of such differences makes it necessary to study carefully the social environment in which literacy work is to be carried out so as to determine the concepts and approaches most likely to ensure its success.

With regard to the enlarging of the concept of illiteracy, progress in science and technology and the information revolution have underlined the increasingly important role of education in developing potential and capabilities. The universalization of reading and writing skills thus no longer provides a solid and sufficient capability and is nowadays a simplistic solution to illiteracy problems. Our efforts must now be directed against functional illiteracy and towards the general introduction of educational programmes that are capable of generating potential and developing aptitudes. Any discussion of literacy therefore hinges on the question of what concept of education is most likely to achieve this objective. Such a concept will not be based on an arbitrary and narrow definition of literacy as the ability to sign one's name and write a few lines or attendance at primary school for a specific number of years. Instead, the basic goal of education will be to provide people with the capabilities and skills they need for working life and in order to cope with the demands of a social environment that is influenced by the social and economic changes taking place in the world. Moreover, the types and standards of educational skills required for participation in economic and national activities and for the development of the individual in the 1990s are certainly different from those that used to be needed in the past and even from those that are likely to be needed in the future. Hence the importance of enlarging the concept of education and literacy in our changing world.

With regard to the cultural dimensions of literacy work, it follows from the principles of the International Decade of Cultural Development, which was proclaimed by the United Nations and for which UNESCO has been assigned responsibility that literacy efforts must be placed within a cultural framework. The cultural development of individuals, linking them with deep historical and cultural roots, is an essential factor in overall development. Literacy work cannot afford to ignore this cultural aspect and concentrate solely on the requirements of the world of work, for education would then lack the cultural values that make literate people so much more capable of development and interaction with society. How appropriate therefore that UNESCO should organize this Conference at the present time, thereby helping to build the defences of peace and human rights in the minds of men and women. It was equally appropriate that the United Nations should proclaim 1990 International Literacy Year, its mission being to preserve world peace and uphold the fundamental principles of the international order whose basic tenet is avoidance of the use of force in international relations.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your Conference falls at the beginning of the 1990s and follows the Declaration of the World Conference on Education for All held in Jomtien with a view to identifying new dimensions and formulating clear guidelines for the achievement of the aims of literacy and adult education.

Finally, I should like to thank the Director-General of UNESCO and the Director of the International Bureau of Education for their excellent work in preparing this Conference, which I trust will make a successful and valuable contribution to tomorrow's world and the future of humanity.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in declaring the 42nd session of the International Conference on Education open and I offer you my very best wishes for success in your work.

ANNEX III

Opening address by Mr Dominique Föllmi, Councillor of State, Head of the Public Education Department of the Republic and Canton of Geneva and Head of the Swiss Delegation

Mr Chairman,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

You will surely agree with me that any social reality, whether national, regional or global in scope, is like a closely interwoven fabric of causes and effects and interacting elements. Those who during the course of history have sought to reduce a conflict or crisis to one single factor have done so either for preconceived ideological reasons, through a desire for simplification or even merely as a propaganda device.

The same applies to illiteracy, which affects a quarter of the world's adult population, although it does not affect all countries, social strata, sexes and ages equally. Illiteracy is not something self-contained that can be considered and dealt with in isolation from its context. On the contrary, it reveals, reflects and sustains the correlative factors of poverty, inequality, exploitation, unemployment, political dependence and social marginality.

The ability to read, write and calculate cannot therefore be regarded merely as a practical skill possessed by a certain proportion of a given society; on the contrary, it reflects the state of the structures and relations of the community. It is the individual's means of achieving dignity and autonomy, of becoming aware of, and capable of acting on, the material, socio-economic and political environment.

It would be interesting to draw a map of the world with shading to show areas of poverty and little dots to show areas of illiteracy. It would then be clearly seen that the two kinds of marking often coincide, because there does really exist a cause and effect relationship, a kind of vicious circle linking poverty and ignorance. You perhaps know that according to UNESCO's estimates the nine countries in which 75.2 per cent of the world's illiterate people live are all, except Brazil, nations considered by the World Bank to be the poorest in the world. Without financial resources there can be no basic or adult education, and without basic education there can be no control over the material environment and no development of resources. It is indeed a vicious circle.

There is another exercise we could try: namely to mark on a world map the regions where conflicts prevail and those where illiteracy predominates. Here again we cannot fail to note some significant coincidences and observe certain curious and perverse links between illiteracy on the one hand and war, exploitation and the irrationality of uncontrolled mobs on the other. For the individual, not knowing how to read, write or calculate means being in a state of dependence with regard to the audio-visual media, particularly television, which may transmit tendentious information or even be a channel for large-scale propaganda or manipulation, as recent conflicts have shown, whereas learning how to master these elementary skills means progressing from the state of a passive follower to that of a responsible citizen; it means acquiring ways to express oneself, compare and criticize; it means civic and political emancipation. Literacy education is thus an instrument of democratization, just as it is a factor of social promotion inasmuch as the individual who masters these three intellectual operations enters the educated stratum of the community.

The campaign against illiteracy is therefore as fundamental as that against hunger and disease or for peace. Literacy should be regarded as one of man's basic needs, along with the need for drink, food, love, belonging and recognition. In a world in which technology is spreading everywhere and changing professional practices, everyday life and relations in space and time the struggle against illiteracy is a measure of survival, for an act as simple as cultivating a field may nowadays depend upon the ability to read the instructions for use of a machine or of fertilizers.

Illiteracy is therefore both the cause and effect of the other major problems besetting humankind - it would in fact be possible to draw several maps showing, for example, a correspondence between illiteracy and hunger or illiteracy and disease. How can we overcome this when an ever-increasing number of men and women are affected by this scourge?

It can be overcome by a determination at all levels that is equal to the immensity of the tasks to be undertaken: determination on the part of the political leaders of the regions or countries concerned (but what are their priorities?); determination on the part of national and multinational organizations, both governmental and non-governmental (but what are their powers of action?); and finally determination on the part of the international community (but how far does it wish to show solidarity?).

This 42nd session of the International Conference on Education, which is now open, is part of a whole series of events and steps that have marked International Literacy Year. The Conference could be both a test and a demonstration of political will, of that determination to promote international co-operation so as to secure all the resources necessary to bring education for all into being, not only in words but in deeds, not only in intention but in actual achievement. This is perhaps a particularly propitious moment to set this vast operation in motion, since the division between East and West is becoming a thing of the past and the international community is able to take concerted action to defend its common values.

Mr Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, on behalf of the Swiss delegation, and as President of the Council of State of the Canton of Geneva, it remains for me to wish you every success in your work, which will reflect that determination to take action and will confirm this propitious environment. The fight against illiteracy is the best means of establishing peace in our world. And this is surely a truth to be proclaimed at a time when one of the strategic regions of the world is under great tension.

ANNEX IV

Opening address by Mr Federico Mayor Zaragoza, Director-General of UNESCO

Mr President of the Council of State,
Head of the Public Education Department of the Republic and Canton of Geneva and Head of the Swiss Delegation,
Mr Chairman,
Distinguished Ministers,
Mr President of the Council of the International Bureau of Education,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to participate with you in the opening of the 42nd session of the International Conference on Education. I should like first of all to express my gratitude to the authorities of the Swiss Confederation and to those of the Republic and Canton of Geneva for the warm hospitality they have always extended to the International Bureau of Education and to the Conference. This world forum of educators has throughout its long history shown remarkable continuity: in the past 50 years only the Second World War was able to interrupt the regularity of its sessions.

I should like to welcome the delegates of Member States, who in numbers and quality reflect the importance countries attach to international co-operation in the field of education and certainly to the themes of this session. I also welcome the presence of observers from non-Member States, national liberation movements and intergovernmental organizations and representatives of organizations of the United Nations system, particularly those who worked with us on the preparation and holding of the World Conference on Education for All, which took place last March in Jomtien, Thailand. And, lastly, may I welcome the observers from non-governmental organizations, whose role in the promotion and conducting of literacy education programmes has always been important and will become increasingly so.

This 42nd session of the International Conference on Education may be described, on more than one count, as exceptional: this is the first time its main theme has coincided with that of the International Year in which it is being held, and the last day of the Conference is International Literacy Day, 8 September 1990. That date also corresponds day for day, 25 years on, with that of the opening of the first World Congress of Ministers of Education on the Eradication of Illiteracy, held in Tehran in 1965.

This 42nd session of the ICE and the Jomtien Conference are the two main international conferences organized for International Literacy Year. Following on from the Jomtien Conference and taking into account the goals to be achieved by the year 2000 proposed by that Conference, the session of the International Conference on Education that opens today is called upon to decide on the most effective strategies and methods of harnessing to the cause of education for all the resources available and the new energy that seems to have been generated in recent years in the international community and in many countries - to a large extent under the stimulus exerted by UNESCO - and thereby give fresh impetus to the development of education.

We may ask why efforts so far to achieve universal literacy have met with relatively limited success. While paying tribute to the developing countries, which have obtained remarkable results, we have to admit that, in comparison with the population growth rate, the rate of expansion of education has not been sufficient to prevent the actual number of illiterates from increasing. As stated in some of the replies to the IBE questionnaire, one of the causes for this is undoubtedly the lack of resources that has for long been affecting many Member States and the relatively small proportion of those resources that goes on education.

Other replies point to a variety of factors. Wastage, particularly early dropping out, has considerably slowed down the process of lowering the illiteracy rate. Such dropping out, as some Member States point out in their replies, is often due to poverty, which forces parents to make their children work, either at home or outside; children who miss school in this way frequently become drop-outs. Another cause is the inadequacy of adult-education programmes in relation to the extent of illiteracy, their mediocre functional value and the consequent lack of motivation among those mainly concerned - the illiterate themselves. And - why not say so frankly - the lack of interest all too often shown by governments and some sections of the public in adult literacy education in general and post-literacy education in particular. Moreover, in a field in which motivation depends also on the extent to which the population groups concerned participate in the design and organization of the programmes, appropriate steps have not always been taken to stimulate effective and dynamic partnerships with the non-governmental organizations and the non-State sector.

You will undoubtedly go more deeply into these matters, complementing this somewhat brief analysis and drawing conclusions that may lead to more effective and better focused action by your governments and the international community. In doing this you will surely not fail to give close attention to ways and means of reducing the grave inequalities that still exist between the sexes and are reflected in the world illiteracy rates - 19.4 per cent for men and 33.6 per cent for women. In the figures for the developing countries alone the difference is even greater.

Close on a thousand million illiterates, tens of millions of functional illiterates, over a hundred million children of school age who do not go to school - this situation is in itself an offence to our collective conscience and to good sense.

Yet some tendencies observed in the last 10 years may make the situation worse still and jeopardize the progress made. During the 1980s the annual growth of school enrolment rates - at all levels but especially at primary level - showed a sudden drop, not only for the world as a whole but also in each of the major regions, with the exception of the developed countries (a larger drop in these rates had been recorded there before, in the 1970s, owing to the decrease in the size of the school-age population).

This drop was particularly sharp in sub-Saharan Africa, where the school enrolment rate was the lowest of all, and had repercussions on the gross school enrolment rate. A drop in the number of primary-school enrolments was also observed in some countries, mostly in sub-Saharan Africa but also in the Latin America and Caribbean region. Lastly, in several countries the literacy education programmes have been suspended, and it would appear that in some not only the number of illiterates but also the illiteracy rate is on the increase.

These disturbing trends may be explained by several factors, both inside and outside education systems, but the main cause has certainly been the decline in the economic and financial situation of very many developing countries. Gravely affected by world economic difficulties, they are suffering from deterioration in the terms of trade and have to face crippling foreign debt. For some years now there has been a net transfer of resources from the poor countries to the rich.

This trend has had highly adverse effects on the financing of education. In real terms, the increase in public expenditure on education during the 1980s was much slower than in the previous decade, in both developed and developing countries, but this slowing down was much more noticeable in the latter. The situation has become particularly acute in Africa (not including the Arab countries), where there was a dramatic reduction in education expenditure between 1980 and 1987 of over 40 per cent. In 1987 expenditure per inhabitant was less than half what it had been in 1980.

The increasing poverty of a large part of the population in many developing countries has also been one of the factors responsible for slowing down the increase in school enrolments and sometimes for reducing them. Similarly, in the developed countries, certain underprivileged groups suffer particularly from failure at school and lack of assiduity at school, which is one of its causes.

Anyone looking beyond the present changing situation and following what are known as the marked trends in the development of societies knows that with each passing year the future of individuals, States and nations depends increasingly on education, the essential driving force and necessary condition for economic and social development.

Two aspects of the matter seem to me fundamental. Firstly, the importance of the right to education and its full and unfettered exercise for the development of the individual and enjoyment of other human rights, without which there can be no well-being nor any true progress nor lasting peace on a national or international scale.

At a time when there is a tendency to regard men and women as 'human resources' to be used to achieve economic goals, and education as a means of 'developing' those resources, I should like to echo the essentially humanistic spirit that prevailed at the founding of UNESCO and of IBE and has been so well illustrated by, for example, Jean Piaget and Pedro Rossello; I should like to emphasize the fact than an individual human being is something of supreme value whose development, self-fulfilment and well-being are for us the most important ultimate goals, and that education's overriding primary role is to contribute as effectively and altruistically as possible to the achievement of those goals.

Education, moreover, is the keystone of the future of a nation. On it depends to a large extent the positions of nations and peoples in the world in relation to each other. There is now no doubt that the level of education of a country's population as a whole and the quality and breadth of that education determine its ability to participate in world development, to avoid lagging behind others or to make up for time lost, to draw benefit from the advancement of knowledge, to make progress while contributing to the progress of others. Education is often regarded by those in high positions of political responsibility as a prerequisite for a country's autonomy and for its economic, social, cultural and political competitiveness among nations. One of the main conclusions of the Conference of over 70 Nobel laureates that, at the invitation of Mr François Mitterrand, President of the French Republic, and Mr Elie Wiesel, Nobel Peace laureate, was convened in Paris in January 1988 expresses this same idea. I quote: 'Education must become the absolute priority in all budgets and must help enhance all aspects of human creativity'. It is now obvious that education for all is one of the great potential benefits, and at the same time presents one of the greatest challenges, of the end of the second millennium.

The Member States and the international community have set themselves the target of achieving universal primary education and eradicating - or substantially reducing - illiteracy before the end of this century. It seems to me that we ought to have an idea - even if it is only an approximate one - of the scope of such a task. With regard to the universalization of primary education through schooling for children of the age regarded as primary-school age in their respective countries, or through equivalent non-formal education programmes, the developing countries' average annual population growth in the age-groups concerned means that by the year 2000 the number of children involved will be some 220 million more than in 1987, always assuming that the number of repeaters does not increase. This would require an average annual increase of about 17 million places in the combined enrolment capacity of primary school and non-formal courses (where they exist) - in those same countries the average annual increase in primary-school enrolments between 1970 and 1980 was approximately 13.5 million.

In order to attain the objective of reducing the illiteracy rate by half by the year 2000 the number of adult literates in the developing countries would have to increase by some 830 million in the next 10 years.

Globally, the task to be accomplished is a very considerable one, and if we think of the difficulties facing many countries we will see that the situation is critical; in fact it is an emergency situation calling for exceptional measures from both Member States and the international community. It seems to me essential that there be a very clear awareness within the international community of this urgency and consequently a determination to regard education and particularly primary and literacy education as being in a state of emergency for the whole of the 1990s, or until such time as the goals set by the World Conference on Education for All have been achieved.

Through co-operation between the international oranizations and bodies concerned and governments, particularly those of countries with a high illiteracy rate or where primary education is stagnating or declining and the number of illiterates rising, energetic, practical measures to be taken by Member States and international organizations must be planned and implemented - on the basis of unequivocal commitments undertaken by both sides.

The determination shown by Member States to make fresh efforts to achieve education for all will undoubtedly attract more substantial support from financing sources. It must be borne in mind that without vigorous and perseverant national effort external aid, however massive, can have only a marginal effect.

In my view it is essential that the new dynamism that has developed within the international community in the last few years and is reflected in the decisions of the governing bodies of UNESCO and the United Nations and the holding of the World Conference on Education for All should be put to full use, not only by the international community itself but above all by the Member States. The moment is propitious: the ending of confrontation and the improvement in the international climate as a whole are conducive to wide-scale concerted action in this vital field.

I also hope that the situations of conflict will soon be resolved within the framework of the United Nations system, of which UNESCO is a Specialized Agency. Emotional reactions are understandable, but it is the responsibility of the United Nations to take decisions on matters within its fields of competence: respect for that approach is the best way of concentrating our efforts effectively on the subjects that are our own concern and are, moreover, essential for maintaining the defences of peace in the minds of men, starting from the very foundations of those defences.

The stakes are enormous, but the potential seems just as great: possibilities for external financing exist and are more substantial than in the past. At Jomtien the Administator of UNDP, the Executive Director of UNICEF and the President of the World Bank gave clear indications concerning the very considerable increase in resources their organizations are prepared to devote to programmes and projects for education for all.

Literacy education has always been one of Unesco's major concerns. The General Conference, at its twenty-fifth session, adopted the Plan of Action for the Eradication of Illiteracy by the Year 2000. At that same session it approved my proposals for a substantial increase in the resources allocated to action in the field of primary education and literacy education.

As you know, UNESCO has offered to provide the international community with services to assist in the follow-up to the World Conference. For that purpose I have set up a special unit, which will be responsible for co-operating with our three co-organizers of the Jomtien Conference. Moreover, as I have already informed the Executive Board, I have released an additional $2 million to finance the follow-up activities and to support Member States' follow-up action. We have in fact already begun working on it with certain Member States.

A number of measures designed to intensify action to promote education for all and to follow up the work of the Jomtien Conference have already been implemented. My collaborators will be able to give you details of these during the Conference.

Last July I had a meeting with the Administrator of UNDP, the Executive Director of UNICEF and the President of the World Bank - our first meeting since the Jomtien Conference. We decided to continue mutual consultations and exchanges of information, to ensure and guide the follow-up to the World Conference, and to meet periodically. We also decided to convene a consultative body on education for all to provide an informal framework for mutual consultation and exchanges of information among all the categories of participants at the Jomtien Conference. This follow-up committee is to hold its first meeting next March. The Executive Committee set up during the preparation for the Conference composed of close collaborators of the heads of the four institutions - UNESCO was represented by the Assistant Director-General for Education - will continue to function and to maintain close co-operation between the institutions.

I feel heartened by the steps already taken by Member States. According to information received by the Secretariat over 50 Member States have begun their own follow-up to the Jomtien Conference, and the Organization is constantly being invited to co-operate in those measures - often in collaboration with our partners.

It seems to me only fair that the countries that have suffered most from financial and economic problems and their repercussions on education should be the first to benefit from support through international co-operation. Africa as a region certainly comes into that category, since practically the whole of sub-Saharan Africa is in a situation of emergency as regards education. In addition to the international support that is being and will be given to certain countries to help them to tackle the situation, co-operation between the countries of the region in the search for solutions to their common problems should be encouraged. The appropriate framework for this would be the Regional Programme for the Eradication of Illiteracy in Africa. However, since that programme was started, the situation has changed considerably. Although the Programme's objectives and their underlying principles seem to me to have lost none of their value the machinery for putting it into effect doubtless requires to be better adjusted to the new situation and to the increased difficulties facing the countries of the region, and the Programme itself probably needs to be strengthened in order to assist them.

In consultation with all concerned, especially the Member States of the region, and with their consent and active participation, the Programme could be updated and revised, taking into account in particular the increased possibilities for financing; it could then be transformed into an emergency programme for the universalization of primary education and literacy education, or for education for all, by the year 2000. That matter might be discussed at the next Conference of Ministers of Education and those Responsible for Economic Planning in African Member States, which is due to be held in 1991.

The Member States that adopted all the objectives to which I have referred and the international community all have a responsibility for the Programme. We should therefore already be planning to make an evaluation in the year 2000 of what has been achieved, to measure the distance covered and to identify new frontiers to be reached in the development of education.

The most comprehensive general indicator for evaluating the extent to which the defined objectives have been attained and the scope of the work still to be accomplished would certainly be the literacy rate reached at the end of this decade. A highly important task would be to collect data that are as accurate, reliable and comparable as possible, and it would be a task of vast scope requiring a considerable amount of work. Operational definitions of literacy and illiteracy would have to be established so as to permit the measurement of levels of competence in writing, and methods established for data collection and processing. Such an activity could become an important UNESCO project in the 1990s. Its purpose would be the preparation, on the basis of the results of national censuses conducted around the year 2000, of a report on the state of literacy and illiteracy in the world. This would be a task to be conducted in co-operation with the United Nations Office of Statistics. Should that Office consider it appropriate to extend the scope of the report to other social areas, co-operation with the appropriate agencies would be necessary and would have to be decided on by means of a resolution adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations.

This is a task which seems to me to be clearly in harmony with our Organization's mission. It would make it possible to provide a solid factual basis for studying the literacy-education and illiteracy situation and for taking action in the field of education. It would also certainly have a mobilizing effect.

What I think of illiterate men and women - whether the illiteracy is absolute or functional - a few lines by Antoine de Saint-Exupery come to mind. Comparing the fate of a rose to that of human beings, he wrote: 'When a new variety of rose springs up in a garden, all the gardeners get excited. The rose is given a place of its own, cultivated and nurtured. But there are no gardeners for human beings'. And thinking of human beings who remain without care and attention, without being cultivated and - I should add - without education, Saint-Exupery continued: 'What troubles me is the gardener's viewpoint ... It is as if there were within each of these people a budding Mozart who had been stifled'. How many Mozarts, Beethovens, Shakespeares, Molières, Ibn-Sinas, Cervantés, Tolstoys, Gabriela Mistrals and Tagores have been 'nipped in the bud' by illiteracy? What a loss for the human race!

Distinguished Ministers,

Education is the key to a future in which justice and freedom, harmonious coexistence and respect for others prevail. The key to your future therefore lies in your hands.

ANNEX V

Opening address by Mr Anil Bordia, Secretary, Department of Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development, India, and Chairman of the 42nd session of the International Conference on Education

Mr Federico Mayor, Director-General of UNESCO,
Distinguished Ministers of Education and other members
of delegations assembled here,
Mr Dominique Föllmi, President of the Council of State
of the Republic and Canton of Geneva,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am overwhelmed by the great honour done to me this morning by all the delegations by electing me Chairman of this most important Conference. I am particularly touched by the confidence in me expressed by the countries of Asia and the Pacific. I should like to thank them for this very generous gesture. I should also like to thank all other delegations and hope that I shall prove worthy of the trust they have reposed in me. My predecessor is a great political leader and eminent educationist. Mr Ahmed Fathi Sorour, Honourable Minister of Education of Egypt, chaired the 41st Conference with distinction, and his address this morning has also been very inspiring. I should like to thank him for the kind words he has said about me. The Swiss Federal authorities and, in particular, the Republic and the Canton of Geneva, have been generous in the hosting of this Conference. On behalf of all the delegations assembled here, I should like to thank these authorities. I should also like to place on record my appreciation for the elaborate documentation and excellent arrangements for the Conference made by the Director of the International Bureau of Education and his colleagues. As President of the Council of IBE, I have been aware of the enormous effort which Mr Tohme and his colleages have taken in making preparations for this Conference.

The 42nd session of the International Conference on Education is taking place at a time which calls for the Conference to play a historic role. International Literacy Year was launched by the United Nations with hope and expectation. It has provided to all the countries of the world, particularly those which suffer from widespread illiteracy, like my country, a spur to action and an occasion for all persons with commitment to the welfare of the depressed and deprived sections of mankind to come together in a common endeavour. UNESCO has provided the intellectual framework and leadership for the conduct of activities under ILY. This Conference should give us an opportunity to review what we have done in this year, and also where we go from here. As all persons connected with the planning and implementation of ILY activities have known, this year is not a year of celebration, nor a year of conferencing and seminaring, nor can this year be looked upon as a time for concluding certain series of activities. It has been recognized by all of us as the year to create new alliances, to apply ourselves in a more systematic and determined fashion to making a major thrust against illiteracy, and as a milestone which leads to a decade of concerted action to make a more humane and literate world.

The World Conference on Education for All was organized at Jomtien, Thailand, in March this year as a result of the joint initiative taken by UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP and the World Bank. The Jomtien Conference was a celebration of people coming together for basic education for all - for primary education, adult literacy and continuing and lifelong education. The main goal of that Conference was to ensure that as we arrive at the twenty-first century we leave behind the ignominy of widespread deprivation, symbolized by illiteracy and millions of children who do not complete primary education at a satisfactory level. This assembly of leaders in the field of education is the occasion to recall the Jomtien vision and to move on towards concrete plans of action and the creation of mutually supportive arrangements therefor.

We are at the eve of the commencement of the Fourth Development Decade, which gives to human development the central position. The great intergovernmental organizations are adapting their policies and priorities to the goals of human resource development and, in particular, to the provision of basic education for all. The World Bank has already come up with important documents to signify its commitment to primary education. UNDP, in its 1990 report, has emphasized that what matters is not growth alone: even more important is the manner in which growth translates into human development. UNICEF is strengthening its capability to support initiatives in the area of basic education. It is only natural that the call for the provision of education for all should have come from UNESCO and that UNESCO should be gearing itself up to play its due role. The third Medium-Term Plan of UNESCO gives highest priority to education for all, takes a hard-headed look at the reality of the situation and goes on to give to this great Organization a new mission, a new pattern for co-operation and mutual support. As we all know, practically all the divisions of UNESCO, all its Regional Offices and specialized institutions have been asked to make their contribution to this cardinal goal.

All of us have to consider the fact that we are now at the threshold of the twenty-first century. I need hardly remind you that in the course of discussions in this Conference we shall have to keep in view all the time the predicament of the masses of people - men and women - toiling in fields and factories; arduously fetching fuel, fodder and water; coping with a depleted environment and increasing populations. All these realities have a bearing on basic education, which is the theme of this Conference - with primary education and adult illiteracy, with the acquisition of skills, the development of new attitudes and perspectives which would enable people to face new challenges, harness new technologies and take advantage of new opportunities.

But the real questions which are being raised in this session of the International Conference on Education have to be faced by national governments - in the developing countries as well as in the industrialized countries. The most important questions before the developing countries are: will they continue to remain preoccupied with civil strife, with militarization, which locally as well as globally makes less and less sense, and will they remain caught in the syndrome of neglect of their own people, particularly women and children in disadvantaged situations. And what about the industrialized countries? While they are overcoming their traditional military and economic rivalries, they remain neglectful of the plight of their poorer brothers and sisters in the distant south. The alarming effects of debt, of commodity prices, of environmental blight, do not seem to concern them enough. The challenge of the coming decade is whether the developing countries will demonstrate a greater determination for human development by overcoming the soft options, which is the option of letting things be, of using violence over their own people, or whether they will bring about the necessary social, economic and cultural transformation, as well as a change in gender relationship which is considered a pre-condition for saner policies towards health, family planning, nutrition, environment and of course education.

I am conscious, Ladies and Gentlemen, that these statements could be treated as 'the usual rhetoric'. But I want to plead with you to keep in mind the total developmental perspective and our duties and responsibilities as leaders in the area of education and human development. I have little doubt that the delegations of all the countries are equally imbued by the sense of urgency to which I have just alluded and that the deliberations of this Conference will help us move towards a more humane and caring order.

While thanking you all once again for the honour you have done me, I wish you a pleasant stay in this beautiful city of Geneva and hope that our deliberations in this Conference will be fruitful and bring satisfaction to us all.

ANNEX VI

Closing address by Mr Federico Mayor Zaragoza, Director-General of UNESCO

Mr Chairman,
Mr President of the Council of State,
  Head of the Public Education Department of the Republic
  and Canton of Geneva and Head of the Swiss Delegation,
Distinguished Ministers,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

As your work draws to a close I should like to congratulate you on the results obtained during a session that has been appreciably shorter than in the past but whose discussion themes were huge and particularly important. The new organization of work of the Conference undoubtedly make it easier for you to examine the items on your agenda in depth within the time available.

The success of your work is due first and foremost to the command, authority and courtesy of your Chairman, whom I wish to thank for his efforts to ensure the smooth functioning of this 42nd session of the Conference. My thanks also go to the Vice-Chairpersons of the Conference, its Rapporteur-General and the Chairmen and Rapporteurs of the Commission and of its six working groups.

And I cannot fail to mention the arduous and delicate task of the Drafting Committee and its Chairman. Ladies and gentlemen, I thank you most sincerely.

On the opening day of our Conference we received messages of support and encouragement from two most distinguished heads of State. One, from Mr Mikhail Gorbachev, addressed directly to the participants of the Conference, strongly emphasizes the significance of literacy as the foundation of culture and science, as an indispensable condition for the progress of civilization and for the moral development of an individual and the realization of his or her role in an interdependent world. The message also expresses the view that the Conference reflects the efforts of educated men and women to establish democracy and humanism in international relations.

The other message is indirect: it is that of Mr François Mitterrand. Although not specifically addressed to our Conference, it is nevertheless relevant to its purpose, themes and concerns. In his address at the opening ceremony of the second United Nations Conference on the Least-Developed Countries, on 3 September 1990, in which he referred to the need to define a plan of action against underdevelopment and to establish a contract of solidarity between the least-developed countries and the creditor countries, the President of the French Republic placed education at the head of the priority sectors to be tackled under such a plan.

Three heads of State - Mr Hussein Muhammad Ershad, President of Bangladesh, Mr Rodrigo Borja Cevallos, President of Ecuador, and Mr Daniel Arap Moi, President of Kenya - came to address the Jomtien Conference last March. From the start, their messages served as a guide to that Conference in its work.

The International Conference on Education provides us with an opportunity to observe, through the words of Mr Gorbachev and Mr Mitterrand, that the developed countries also are becoming more and more aware of the importance, for themselves, of the goals of education for all and of functional literacy - and of the importance of international co-operation in this field.

There have been a number of eloquent examples during this session of the developed world's growing interest in education for all and literacy education - for instance that of Australia, which has decided to devote $40 million to literacy education there.

Through the number and quality of the delegations from Member States, the observers from non-Member States and the representatives and observers from intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and through the spirit and tone of the debates, this Conference has shown that the recent movement in favour of the development of education and education for all is growing stronger and spreading more widely. Your debates and the care with which you prepared the Recommendation you have just adopted show that the themes discussed at this session are of immediate importance for all countries without exception, for all men, women and children, for young people of all ages from North, South, East and West. I shall go further and say that these themes have an emotional charge to which we are all sensitive. Your debates have shown moreover that the concepts of basic education and literacy are much richer now than may be thought at first - I shall return to this later.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This 42nd session of the International Conference on Education has been described as a central or key event in International Literacy Year. It has maintained the continuity of the world debate on education for all and has clearly continued the thrust of the Jomtien Conference by providing, as has been said, an opportunity for an initial exchange of views on possible follow-up measures. These are points I cite from your debates, and, as was rightly observed, there has as yet been too little time since Jomtien to attempt to make an assessment of the action taken. Personally, I feel that in co-operation with our partners of Jomtien we must consider action on a broad scale, for example halfway between now and the year 2000, so as to assess what has been done in the first half of the 1990s and define the action to be recommended to Member States and conducted by the international organizations.

In following on from the Jomtien Conference you have reaffirmed the goals it proposed and the priorities it defined. I was particularly glad to see the strong emphasis you placed on giving absolute priority to women's education.

Once again you clearly stated your unanimous support for the comprehensive strategy or 'two-track' approach adopted by UNESCO, which consists in tackling in simultaneous and co-ordinated fashion the two problems of universalization and renewal of primary education and adult literacy education.

The work of the Conference confirms the great importance attached throughout the world to achieving education for all and universal literacy. It confirms this especially through the richness, diversity and originality of the practical measures already taken or decided on. The Conference has also confirmed that importance by emphasizing that several developing countries, including some that are in a particularly difficult economic and financial situation, have managed to increase the resources allocated to education in general - and basic education in particular. Some of these measures are social and financial in nature, being aimed at helping children from poor families and underprivileged groups to gain access to education and attend school regularly (school transport, financial help for families, free school lunches, free books and stationery, etc.). Others consist in setting up 'non-formal' programmes, either when it is impossible to provide schooling for all the children or when the children cannot attend school for social, economic or family reasons. Other measures concern the reduction of educational wastage, the revision of educational content in order to increase its relevance and the rational use of school premises for both child and adult education.

Although the efforts that have been made show that the difficulties have in no way resulted in paralysis or opposition to progress, they nevertheless remain, in most cases, insufficient to overcome the obstacles to universalization of primary or basic education and adult literacy by the year 2000.

The 'alarming situation' of education systems in many developing countries, the 'urgent measures' needed to 'make education a priority', the 'educational crisis', the 'emergency situation' in education - these are some of the expressions heard during the debates. They confirm that it is essential, as I stressed at the opening of this Conference, that there should be increased awareness within the international community of the critical situation in education, particularly primary and literacy education, and a formal commitment to regard it as being in a state of emergency for the whole period of the 1990s, or until such time as the goals set by the Jomtien Conference have been achieved. It goes without saying that in doing this we shall not confine ourselves simply to adopting declarations; we must define and implement a series of energetic measures to be taken by Member States and the international organizations.

In a sense UNESCO already began to take this position when it adopted the regional programmes for the eradication of illiteracy. This became obvious when the General Conference at its twenty-fifth session, less than a year ago, decided, on my proposal, to make a substantial increase in the resources allocated under the regular programme to activities relating to the development and renewal of primary education and literacy education. Literacy education and education for all have become the top priority for the Organization, and I shall take steps to see that this priority is reflected in practical action.

You said here that 'To achieve education for all, all should be for education' and 'education for all requires the support of all'. You also said, echoing my own opening statement, that this was the right moment for a new departure towards education for all and universal literacy. It is the right moment from the point of view of the general political climate and also of the current psychological context, and because there are now increased possibilities of financing. We have had fresh confirmation of this from several of the industrialized countries and from the representative of the World Bank. I should incidentally like to take this opportunity to express on behalf of the Organization my deep gratitude to the Government of Japan, which, as announced by the Head of the Japanese Delegation, plans to make a voluntary contribution to UNESCO of a total of US $700,000 to support literacy programmes in the Asia and the Pacific region.

It seems to me essential that all the possibilities for international co-operation in education and all its forms, including intellectual co-operation, should be made use of, and that the developing countries should not hesitate to seize this opportunity, so as not to lose the momentum that has developed.

I am convinced that the goals defined at Jomtien can be achieved, and that to do so we - Member States and the international community - must all take firm action. Action is now essential. With that in view the International Conference on Education could, at each of its sessions, make an assessment of progress in attaining the Jomtien goals.

A moment ago I referred to the enrichment of the concepts of basic education and literacy, upon which there has been a profusion of ideas. Basic education and literacy, as you said, can no longer be regarded as static, unchanging and uniform concepts. They are historically, culturally, ecologically and even individually specific. Basic education and literacy education can be functional only in the broad sense of the term, functional from the cultural, social and ethical points of view and not exclusively from the economic and vocational points of view. What is expected nowadays from basic education and literacy education is not simply a form of education that meets the immediate needs of 1990 - the purposes assigned to them are ambitious ones. We need a form of education that faces towards the future and sets its sights on the coming decades. Hence the need for quality training and higher standards, so as to ensure that all individuals can live in harmony with their natural and social environment, can become an integral part of it and embark with confidence on their working life.

Some of you go even further and inquire whether the most common interpretation of literacy and basic education is free of technocratic, dogmatic or authoritarian influences. This line of thought should certainly be pursued.

Two key ideas seem to me to have emerged from your debates. One is that education is the foundation of democracy and social justice, that it is an essential condition for respect for and the exercise of human rights and for full and unfettered participation in the life of society. It is undoubtedly the aspiration for and irresistible movement towards greater and more widespread democracy that has given your debates this particular slant.

The other idea that struck me and, along with the first idea, has my full support reveals a humanistic view of education. It makes education subordinate to the human being, to his or her self-fulfilment, moral, intellectual and physical welfare, rejecting any tendency to adapt education and literacy to purely economic goals. What seems to me equally important is that this humanistic view of education is neither an abstract nor a standardizing one. It implies diversification, safeguarding of the cultural and linguistic identity of education, which is regarded as an essential aspect of respect for human rights. Education for all, as you said, implies diversification. Uniformity leads to wasting of talent, school failure and the reproduction of inequality.

Thus the humanistic approach, the goal of the democratization of education and the endeavour to seek out its cultural relevance all blend together. This eclectic view of education for all seems to me to be one of the significant ideas to have been asserted at the present session. We must now draw practical conclusions from this within the framework of educational policies and planning, in the working out of educational content and methods and the definition of its pedagogical goals.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As I said, the themes discussed at this session are of concern and interest to all countries. In the same way the goals defined at Jomtien are valid for all. Yet all countries do not have the same possibility of achieving those goals, and here I am thinking of the least-developed countries, whose problems are now being discussed in Paris. The international community is called upon to give them all its support to help them advance in an area that is essential to their development. Now, on the threshold of a new millennium, it is time to give up conflict and make way for understanding; it is time to move forward together, hand in hand, the poorer being supported by the strength and generosity of the richer.

ANNEX VII

Closing address by Mr Dominique Föllmi, Councillor of State, Head of the Public Education Department of the Republic and Canton of Geneva and Head of the Swiss Delegation

Mr Director-General,
Mr Chairman,
Mr Rapporteur-General,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our Conference is now drawing to a close, after the prize-giving ceremony by which we formally celebrated International Literacy Day. This Conference, which is both an opportunity and a challenge - coming so soon after the World Conference on Education in Jomtien, with the key issues that were examined there - has brought us together in pursuit of the same ideal of education for all. Despite their intensity, our debates have neither exhausted the subject nor provided any immediate magic solutions, but we have undoubtedly prepared the ground, bridged some of the gaps and sustained our shared enthusiasm.

Our feelings today are a mixture of pleasure and regret, as always in such circumstances.

We regret that the time has gone by so quickly, because we would like to have had more meetings, continued our conversations and held more thoroughgoing discussions.

But of course we are delighted that this Conference has been a success and that we have worked in an excellent atmosphere. This is due firstly to the quality of the participants and their shared determination, to the well disciplined debates, the value of the contributions and the competence of all those who had the task of conducting those debates, recording their content and giving final form to the recommendation. It is also due to the very hard work of all the Secretariat staff, to whom we should like to pay tribute, expressing our warm thanks to them for having accomplished their task impeccably despite the reduced time available. I should also like to thank the interpreters, who are so faithful to their post and who facilitate communication between us.

This session has demonstrated not only the need for our Conference but also its determination and capacity for innovation. The new structures that have been established are an important step towards improving efficiency and will doubtless, after the 'teething troubles' of an initial period of trial, adaptation and improvement, show substantial progress in future.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the time has come for us to part. Geneva and Switzerland have been happy to welcome you. We hope that you have enjoyed your stay in our country, and the good wishes of the Genevese and Swiss authorities go with you. We shall all resume our daily tasks, with all their problems, but we do not doubt that this Conference has given us renewed resolve to move from promising debates to firm commitments on the road to education for all.

I wish you good luck, my friends.

Thank you.

ANNEX VIII

Closing address by Mr Anil Bordia, Secretary, Department of Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development, India, and Chairman of the 42nd session of the International Conference on Education

Mr Federico Mayor, Director-General of UNESCO,
Mr Dominique Föllmi, President of the Council of State
of the Republic and Canton of Geneva,
Honourable Ministers and other fellow delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we come to the close of the 42nd session of the International Conference on Education, my faith in participatory consensus building for a new future for mankind gets reinforced. One has experienced, once again, in this gathering of distinguished political leaders, eminent educationists, pioneers in educational innovations, representatives of teachers' organizations, and so many others, an undiminished yearning for a better tomorrow, an era which will not divide people between the illiterate and those who have access to multiple means of communication and information; between people within every country who are completely dispossessed, leading a life of ignorance, destitution and despair, and those who have the best of everything. UNESCO, for me, is the symbol of the faith of the international community in mankind, in man's capacity to overcome, to overcome the constraints imposed on the human mind by dead habit, and to overcome the narrow walls which all of us have built around ourselves.

Education for all has been a continuing theme in UNESCO's plans and programmes. By securing the declaration of 1990 as International Literacy Year UNESCO has given itself a mission, a chance to put away its past as an arena of international power politics, a past of acrimony over issues which had little to do with the mandate of the Organization. As was evident from the speech of the Director-General, which you have just heard, UNESCO will now apply itself, even more than in the past, to understanding the critical needs of individual member countries, and to doing all that is possible within its resources to meet those needs.

Because, Ladies and Gentlemen, we are dealing with very difficult issues - the issues of adult literacy and primary education are not as simple as may be assumed by those who have grown up in a milieu of universal literacy, or who have witnessed the spread of mass education as a part of revolutionary socio-economic transformations. The countries which have not been able to universalize primary education and which have low literacy rates are countries which are faced with a multiplicity of very serious problems - instability of the political system, expenditure on armed forces beyond their capacities, gross social and economic inequalities, environmental crisis, unrestricted population growth, etc. The illiterate adults who do not send their children to schools and are unwilling to attend literacy classes are not ignorant and foolish. They see little purpose in the education which the élite of their country has devised for them. A show of indifference to education is the way the masses show their distrust in the machinations of the dominant classes. In grappling with the problem of education for all, therefore, we are not dealing only with educational issues, not even with the traditionally understood issue of motivation. We are here talking about creating a new sense of confidence among the illiterates, about entrusting back to them the responsibility, and the resources, for managing their basic human needs - of food, shelter, health, education. Therefore, while literacy is of course an educational issue it is also a political issue, a health issue, an environmental issue.

Director-General, Ladies and Gentlemen, I am pleased to acknowledge that the documentation of the Conference and the reports of the working groups, as well as Recommendation No. 77 which we have just adopted, come close to the perspective I have referred to. I should like to take this opportunity to congratulate you all for thoroughly and successfully dealing with the issues raised in the background documents, and the various ancillary issues. As the report of the Rapporteur-General, of our respected Chairman of the Commission and the momentous Recommendation No. 77 show, we have all travelled together in harmony for realization of the goals of the Conference. As the Sanskrit hymn from the ancient Rigveda says:

सं गच्छध्वं

सं वदध्वं

सं वो मनांसि जानतां

May we move together, may we speak with one voice, may our minds be in concordance, for a better realization of ourselves.

We explored in this Conference a new method of working together - rather than having two commissions, we established six working groups and one commission. I have had consultation with the Chairmen of the Commission and of the working groups and with several participants. I suppose you would agree with me that this has given us a greater opportunity to interact, to understand each other and to deal professionally with questions of pedagogy and management. This is not to say that there have not been shortcomings. The working groups did not have clear indications regarding the background material they were to deal with, what exactly their functions were, and in what way the reports of their deliberations would be utilized. As President of the Council of IBE, I should like to apologize for these deficiencies. I propose to ask the Council to work out in future the preparatory details more comprehensively.

While talking of deficiencies, let me mention another matter which was considered yesterday by the Bureau of the Conference. As far as we know, no record is maintained and no information is disseminated about the action taken on the recommendations of the International Conferences on Education. The Bureau felt that this was a matter of sufficient importance to deserve a special recommendation to the Director-General to see that, along with other preparatory documents, all member countries are informed about the action taken on the preceding Conference. I propose also to take up this matter in the Council of IBE and to follow it up. We need to remind ourselves in every such conference that an enormous investment of money and time is being made here, and we owe it to ourselves to insist that the outcomes of such meetings are commensurate with the investment and that there is sufficient record to discern this.

I have now to discharge the pleasant duty of thanking our Director-General on behalf of all the participants of this Conference, and on my own behalf. He has spent a good part of these days with us, and has advised and guided us in conformity with the highest tradition of his high office. Likewise, the Deputy Director-General and Assistant Director-General (Education) and a large number of Secretariat staff, Directors of Regional Offices and members of IIEP and UIE have facilitated our work and have significantly contributed to the success of the Conference.

We all realize that the new system of organization of this Conference has cast a heavy responsibility on the Chairmen and Rapporteurs of the Commission and of the six working groups. All of them have carried out their responsibility with great skill and patience, and we have reason to feel obliged to them. The Drafting Committee had much less time during this Conference, but they not only completed their task; they did it with due regard for the feelings of the member countries, and with exceptionally good drafting skill. To them, and particularly to its Chairman Mr Brunswick, I should like to express our gratitude.

On this occasion, I also cannot forget the tremendous effort put in by the Secretary-General of the Conference, Mr Tohme, the Secretary of the Council, Mr Adamets, and all the staff of the International Bureau of Education. They prepared basic documents of high professional quality and provided assistance to our work which has helped in raising the standard of deliberations in the Conference. On behalf of all the participants of the Conference, I would like to place on record our appreciation for the work done by the Director of IBE and all his colleagues.

In conclusion, I should like to thank once again the Swiss authorities for their warm hospitality, and for the excellent weather they arranged for this last week! And last, but obviously not least, our thanks are due to the most competent team of interpreters, who have worked long hours, have acceded to our request to stay on beyond their hours of work and have made it possible to conduct this Conference smoothly.

With these remarks, Ladies and Gentlemen, I come to the very close of my statement, and indeed of the Conference itself. I am sure you have found your stay in Geneva exhilarating and your participation in the Conference rewarding. While declaring this Conference closed, I express the wish that we shall meet after two years with the satisfaction of having made progress as envisaged in this Conference, Inshah Allah.

ANNEX IX

List of documents distributed during the session and national reports submitted to the Conference

I. CONFERENCE WORKING DOCUMENTS

ED/BIE/CONFINTED 42/1	Provisional agenda
ED/BIE/CONFINTED 42/2	Proposed organization of the work of the Conference
ED/BIE/CONFINTED 42/3	Main working document: the struggle against illiteracy: policies, strategies and emerging operational action for the 1990s
ED/BIE/CONFINTED 42/4 Prov.	Preliminary Draft Recommendation No. 77 to Ministries of Education concerning the struggle against illiteracy: policies, strategies and operational programmes for the 1990s
ED/BIE/CONFINTED 42/5	Draft amendment to the Revised Rules of Procedure of the International Conference on Education

II. REFERENCE DOCUMENT

ED/BIE/CONFINTED 42/Ref.1	Compendium of statistics on illiteracy - 1990 edition

III. INFORMATION DOCUMENTS

ED/BIE/CONFINTED 42/Inf.1	List of participants
ED/BIE/CONFINTED 42/Inf.2	Address by Mr Federico Mayor Zaragoza, Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) at the opening of the 42nd session of the International Conference on Education
ED/BIE/CONFINTED 42/Inf.3	Questionnaire concerning the Conference, to be completed by heads of delegations

IV. OTHER DOCUMENTS AND PUBLICATIONS

1. Literacy lessons: Geneva, UNESCO: International Bureau of Education, 1990. Forty booklets in English, French and Spanish, published within the framework of International Literacy Year. (The Spanish version was produced free of charge by the Catalonia UNESCO Centre, Barcelona, Spain.)

2. International Yearbook of Education, Vol. XLII - 1990: Literacy and illiteracy in the world: situation, trends and prospects, prepared for the International Bureau of Education by Sema Tanguiane. (Available in English and French.)

3. Bulletin of the International Bureau of Education, 64th year, Nos. 254-257, 1990: Literacy in developing countries: an analytical bibliography, prepared for the International Bureau of Education by the UNESCO Institute for Education (Ursula Giere, Adama Ouane, A. Mahinda Ranaweera). (Available in English at present.)

4. An overview of literacy: selected world bibliography, prepared for the International Bureau of Education by Shapour Rassekh, 1990. (IBEdata) (Now available in French.)

5. World Declaration on Education for All, and Framework of Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs. Jomtien (Thailand), 5-9 March 1990. (Available in English, French and Spanish.)

6. Final Report of the International Congress: 'Planning and Management of Educational Development', Mexico.

7. Study by the UNESCO Institute for Education (Hamburg): Handbook on learning strategies for post-literacy and continuing education, by Adama Ouane.

V. NATIONAL REPORTS

National reports on the development of education were submitted to the 42nd session by the Member States listed below (in English alphabetical order).

Countries	Languages
Afghanistan	English
Albania	French
Angola	French
Argentina	English and Spanish
Australia	English
Austria	English
Bahrain	English/Arabic
Benin	French
Brazil	English
Bulgaria	French
Burundi	French
Byelorussian SSR	English and French
Cameroon	French
Cape Verde	French
Central African Republic	French
China	English
Colombia	Spanish
Congo	French

Countries	Languages
Côte d'Ivoire	French
Cuba	English and Spanish
Cyprus	English
Czechoslovakia	English
Denmark	English
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	English
Egypt	Arabic
Finland	English
France	French
Gabon	French
German Democratic Republic	English
Germany, Federal Republic of	English and German
Ghana	English
Greece	English
Guatemala	Spanish
Guinea	French
Guyana	English
Hungary	English
India	English
Iraq	Arabic and English
Iran, Islamic Republic of	English
Israel	English
Italy	English
Japan	English
Jordan	English
Kenya	English
Lesotho	English
Luxembourg	French
Malawi	English
Malaysia	English
Maldives	English
Mali	French
Malta	English
Mauritius	English
Mexico	Spanish and English
Morocco	French
Netherlands	English
Nicaragua	Spanish
Niger	French
Nigeria	English
Norway	English
Pakistan	English
Panama	Spanish
Peru	Spanish
Poland	English
Portugal	French
Qatar	Arabic and English
Republic of Korea	English
Romania	French
Rwanda	French
San Marino	French
Saudi Arabia	English and Arabic
Senegal	French
Somalia	English
Spain	Spanish and English
Sri Lanka	English
Swaziland	English
Sweden	English

Countries	Languages
Switzerland	French
Syrian Arab Republic	French
Thailand	English
Togo	French
Tunisia	French
Turkey	English
Uganda	English
Ukrainian SSR	Ukrainian, Russian, English, French and Spanish
USSR	Russian and English
United Arab Emirates	English
United Republic of Tanzania	English
Venezuela	Spanish
Yemen	English
Yugoslavia	English
Zaire	French
Zimbabwe	English

VI. OTHER DOCUMENTS

These are documents other than the national reports submitted either by Member States or by observers at the 42nd session of the ICE:

The fight against illiteracy in Albania (1945-1955) (Albania)

Eradication or massive reduction of illiteracy (Federal Republic of Germany)

Basic education and the eradication of illiteracy: the challenge of quality (Bahrain) (in Arabic)

The Botswana National Literacy Programme: Constraints and successes (Botswana)

International Literacy Year activities in Botswana (Botswana)

Literacy Education in Burkina Faso (Burkina Faso)

Adult literacy, Canada, 1990: Reply to questionnaire ED/BIE/CONFINTED/42/Q/89 (Canada)

Literacy in China (China)

Reply to questionnaire ED/BIE/CONFINTED/42/Q/89 (Egypt) (in Arabic)

Progress of education in the United States of America - 1984 through 1989 (United States of America)

Basic education in Ethiopia: challenges and prospects (Ethiopia)

The Ethiopian National Literacy Campaign: retrospect and prospects, 1979-1989 (Ethiopia)

The Malta Adult-Literacy Programme, 1990 and beyond (Malta)

Blueprint on mass literacy in Nigeria (Nigeria)

Report on the eradication of illiteracy and basic education (Palestine) (in Arabic)

The conception of general secondary education as a basic component in the unified system of continuous education (USSR)

From eradication of illiteracy to a new concept of literacy (USSR)

Public education in the USSR (USSR)

The State basic curriculum (USSR)

ANNEX X

LISTE DES PARTICIPANTS/LIST OF PARTICIPANTS/LISTA DE PARTICIPANTES

Les noms et titres qui figurent dans les listes ci-après sont reproduits dans la forme où ils ont été communiqués au Secrétariat par les délégations intéressées. Les pays sont mentionnés dans l'ordre alphabétique français.

Names and titles in the following lists are reproduced as handed in to the Secretariat by the delegations concerned. Countries are shown in the French alphabetical order.

Los nombres y títulos de las siguientes listas se han consignado en la forma en que los comunicaron las delegaciones interesadas. Los países stán en orden alfabético francés.

Etats membres/Member States/Estados Miembros

Afghanistan/Afghanistán

H.E. Mrs Massuma Esmaty Wardak
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Algérie/Algeria/Argelia

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Chargé d'études et de synthèse au Cabinet du Ministre de l'éducation nationale

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Allemagne (République fédérale d')/Germany (Federal Republic of)/Alemania, República federal de

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Embajador D. Jorge Zain Asis
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Ministro Plenipotenciario D. Gregorio Dupont
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Ministro Alberto Carri
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Secretario Da. Ana Moglia
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Secretario Da. Patricia Fabro
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Sra. Patricia España-Smith
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Botswana

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D. Joaquín Garcia Carrasco
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Minister of Education and Chairman of the Ethiopian National Agency for Unesco

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Gabon

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Haïti/Haiti/Haití

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Educational assistant in the Literacy Movement

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Liberation Movement recognized by the League of Arab States
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International Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Relationship with Unesco
Organizaciones internacionales no gubernamentales que mantienen relaciones de consulta con la Unesco

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M. le Prof. Louis-Philippe Laprevote
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ANNEX XI

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Mlle C. Higgins (BIE)
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Mme S. Roux (BIE)
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